

# MEMORIES OF A SOLDIER'S LIFE





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BY

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*WITH PORTRAIT*

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“Reading maketh a full man, Conference a ready man, and Writing an exact man.”

BACON'S ESSAYS.

“Read not to contradict and confute, nor to believe and take for granted, nor to find talk and discourse, but to weigh and consider.”

BACON'S ESSAYS.

## FOREWORD

Count failure as success if it indeed  
But make thee more determined to succeed.

H. M. B.

WHEN it was first suggested to me by certain good friends that I should commit my reminiscences to paper with a view to their publication, my earliest impulse was to exclaim with George Canning's needy Knife Grinder, "Story, God bless you, I have none to tell, sir!"

And yet on reflection it occurred to me that though after nearly half a century of service bearing arms I could claim to have accomplished but little that could have any pretension to rank as history, yet I remembered that I had passed many happy days as a soldier, had made not a few firm friends, and had been able to perform some small services for the State, for which I have been more than adequately rewarded.

And as this good fortune has come to me without any special deserts on my part, without interest in high places, without any remarkable mental or intellectual gifts, without any particular accidents of good luck, I have thought that a slight sketch of my life-history might prove of some interest, and might, I would hope, encourage others who follow me

in the honourable and fascinating profession of arms, to give their best, in the full assurance that their reward will come, if not in outward honours, in at least the satisfaction of a good conscience and the possession of a store of happy memories.

H. M. BENGOUGH.

HYDE BRAE, CHALFORD,  
GLOS.

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# MEMORIES OF A SOLDIER'S LIFE

## CHAPTER I

### IN THE CRIMEA

IT was in the early days of the Crimean War that I found myself one happy morning, a Rugby schoolboy, gazetted an Ensign in the 77th Regiment, then serving at the seat of war; a regiment that had already, under its gallant commander, Colonel Egerton, gained a distinguished reputation among the many distinguished regiments that composed our army in the Crimea.

There were few difficulties in those days in obtaining a commission in the army; a nomination by the Commander-in-Chief, or Lord Lieutenant of the county, or other influential recommendation, a pass examination at Sandhurst in the following subjects, viz. the first four books of Euclid, Mathematics up to Logarithms, Dictation, Roman, Greek, and English Dates, Elementary Fortification, Latin, and one Foreign Language, and a Medical Examination.

The sums payable under the Purchase System for the first three commissions in the infantry were: ensign £450, lieutenant £700, captain £1100. I have no intention here to attempt the defence of the Purchase

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System, which is indeed in the abstract indefensible ; but like many other theoretically unsound doctrines, it had worked well in practice, and was popular in the service among, I believe, the non-purchase men as well as with those who had purchased commissions. The reason being probably that the latter were able eventually to sell their commissions, and sometimes for a considerable sum "over regulation."

The system has been condemned and abolished, and no doubt properly so, and few would now advocate its restoration ; but like many another morally and materially indefensible system it proved suited to its day and effective in practice. In its defence it has been urged that the British soldier is possessed with the strong feudal feeling that makes him ready and willing to follow the leader of the higher social rank, which he and his forbears have for generations been accustomed to regard with respect and submission. It may be added also that an officer with a long purse and a generous soul has materially the means of winning popularity denied to a poor man.

It has been said, and probably with some truth, that had Colonel Wellesley not been a brother of the Earl of Mornington he would never have been the Duke of Wellington. Lastly, there is no doubt that an ex-soldier officer, though there are brilliant exceptions, seldom proves a great success. He generally knows too much, and the men know it.

The standard of education required in those days for a commission in the Army was not a very high one. It but little exceeded the present "fifth standard" of our National schools, and included a

medical examination. Needless to say that at this period there was no lack of nominees for commissions. In our own neighbourhood it seemed as if everybody "had gone to be a soldier." I well remember the intense interest with which a letter received from our neighbour Colonel Nigel Kingscote, who was serving as aide-de-camp on the staff of his uncle Lord Raglan, was read aloud in our drawing-room one evening. In the letter he mentioned, quite casually, how at the battle of the Alma a shell from the Russian batteries fell almost under his horse, and how, as he characteristically expressed it, he "kicked his horse out of the way." Another friend and neighbour, Sir William Young, had fallen on the same field, leading his company of 23rd Welsh Fusiliers. Many others of my friends, neighbours, and school-fellows, were at the front, and I looked eagerly forward to joining them there.

It was about this time, however, that an accident happened to me which, though not worth recording in itself, is an instance of how a small matter may affect the future of one's life.

I had been playing in a cricket match at Kingscote Park in Gloucestershire, a few miles from my home, "The Ridge," and had mounted my pony to return home. The ostler at the inn where we put up had failed to fasten the girths, I started at a canter, the pony shied at something, the saddle slipped round, and I was dismounted, falling on my right hip.

I was soon up and on my way again, and thought little of my fall. But in a day or so inflammation



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set in and soon spread to the bone, and our country doctor began to look serious and talk of the possible necessity of an amputation at the hip joint. Fortunately a clever doctor from Bath, who was attending my father, took me in hand, and by the apparently simple remedies of cold compresses and champagne saved my leg, and enabled me to obtain the ambition of my life, a commission to serve as a soldier.

My "Wilkinson" sword was given to me by a relative, the rector of a neighbouring parish, and I well remember as I buckled it on for the first time, and essayed to walk with martial bearing to my father's study, how I wondered when I should be on sufficiently good terms with my highly esteemed badge of military rank to walk with it without it trying to get between my legs and trip me up.

Within a few days of my being gazetted I received an order to join the depôt of my regiment at Parkhurst, where I was initiated into the art of training for war as then understood, and which consisted merely in marching straight to the front on a given point, counter-marching and occasionally wheeling, which latter was regarded by our drill instructor as quite an advanced military manœuvre.

As an officer, I was entrusted with the leading of the squad, and placed on what was called the pivot flank, and was cautioned that the correct advance of the squad or company depended on me. Not being familiar, however, with the military phraseology of the instructor, on being directed by him to "keep my right shoulder up," I not unreasonably imagined that he was referring to some physical

deformity, and forthwith slightly raised my right shoulder, much to the amusement of the initiated and of our instructor, who explained that the command meant me to "incline slightly to the left."

This was the only preparation for war that I received. The very word "military tactics" was then unknown, or was comprised in the command "Fix bayonets!" "Fire a volley!" "Prepare to charge!" "Charge!" We were not, however, kept long on the drill ground in those days, and I hailed with boyish enthusiasm the order to proceed with a draft of my regiment to the seat of war.

A brief stay at Malta and at Constantinople opened out to me something of the delights of travel abroad, and allowed us to admire the beauties of St. John's Church at the former, and at the latter place the famous church of St. Sophia with the attendant reverent groups of the faithful. Here also I made the acquaintance, though not too close a one, of the Constantinople street scavenger, the pariah dog, and rejoiced after our sea voyage in the luxury of a real Turkish bath, followed by a cup of real Turkish coffee. Before we sailed we were able to visit the hospital at Scutari, where lay our wounded from the front under the happy charge of the noble lady who has added one more to the list of great women who have accomplished a great work.

On our way through the Black Sea we met a home-bound steamer carrying despatches to the effect that the preliminaries for a suspension of hostilities had been agreed on, and were then on their way home for ratification.

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We young soldiers received this piece of news with mixed feelings, as it dispelled any dreams that we may have formed of the glory of war, of chances of distinction, and of rapid promotion. Of the darker side of the picture we had not as yet had experience.

On our arrival at the Crimea we were sent up at once to join our regiments, and I found myself, thanks to my inches, and much to my own satisfaction, posted to our Grenadier company. The unsuccessful attack on the Redan had shortly taken place, and my brother subaltern was one of those who had been wounded in the assault. My company commander, a fine soldier 6 ft. 3 ins. in height, Captain Robert Willington, a fearless Irishman, had been in the habit of jumping on to the parapet in our advanced trenches, "Just to give them a shot," as he said, but he was never hit.

I found my old friend and neighbour and school-fellow, Fitzy Kingscote, who had lately joined the 41st Welsh Regiment, lying in his tent accepting very philosophically the loss of his right arm. I may mention here that when after the war he had been fitted with a hook for a hand he would boast that he could shoot as well or better from his left shoulder than he could in former days from his right.

Another curious incident in the attack on the Redan was that of an officer in my regiment who had a bullet wound in his foot, but no sign of entry of the bullet in his boot.

Soon after joining the regiment I was detailed for picquet duty at Fort St. Paul; a post on our side of the small bay that divided us from the Russians, whose voices we could plainly hear as they

relieved sentries. The commander of our picquet was a very youthful looking young captain ; indeed, as a matter of fact, he was, I believe, the youngest captain in the army, for our regiment had suffered very heavily in officers during the war. He pointed out to me a low wall in front of our picquet post, and told me that in case of a Russian attack I was to hold that wall with a section of men. I was not sorry that I was not called on to distinguish myself on this particular occasion.

Indeed, the only occasion of my coming under fire in the Crimea was one day when I went out with a brother subaltern, by name Saunders, to try for a snipe in the valley of the Tchernaya. The Russians held the eastern heights commanding the valley. As we were plodding along through the marshy ground we saw a puff of smoke from the heights opposite, followed by a report, and then the thud of a bullet in the ground near us. Accepting this as a hint to go, we turned about and went. As I was retiring I noticed my companion—who was an Austrian by birth, his father having served in the Austrian army, and who was not very strong in his English—running from side to side in a curious fashion that amused me very much. When well out of range, I said, “ Why, Saunders, were you running in that funny manner, first to one side and then to the other ? ” He replied in his broken English, “ Oh, did you not zee that I did run in de ‘ zeezag ’ so dat they should not hit me ! ”

I may recall here another rather droll instance of the limited command of English of my friend and

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brother subaltern. He was drilling his company on an adjutant's parade, and had correctly given the command "Quick, mark time." This now antiquated movement meant that the men were to move their feet in quick time up and down without gaining ground. After a time the men began to get a little tired and unsteady, and Saunders became evidently rather uneasy and fidgeted about, but gave no word of command. At last he turned to his colour-sergeant, who was behind him, and said *sotto voce*, "Sergeant, how do you stop them?" "Say 'Halt,' sir," said the sergeant, saluting.

There was a story current in the camp at this time which created a strong feeling, both in the Russian army and in our own, which is worth recounting. The principal person concerned, or the hero of the story as perhaps he may be regarded, was Captain Frederick Butts of our regiment, who was in command of an outlying picquet of the regiment on the morning of Inkerman day. Under cover of a fog the picquet was surprised by the Russians at day-break, and Captain Butts was taken prisoner, and was sent under an escort of two Russian soldiers to Sebastopol. Butts had used his revolver in the *mêlée*, but it had missed fire, and probably for that reason it had not been taken from him. On the way to the town they sat down to rest, and one of the soldiers went to sleep. Butts, thinking to have another chance of liberty, and having presumably recapped his revolver, shot the soldier who was in charge of him, and disarmed the sleeping man and marched him a prisoner into our camp. The story reads rather

like a tale out of a book, but it is certainly true in the main, though it possibly differs in detail from the account given at the time by the *Times*' War Correspondent. The matter came to the ears of the Russian Commander-in-Chief, who is reported to have said that if he caught Captain Butts he would hang him. It also prejudiced poor Butts' future, for he would otherwise, I believe, have received the Order of Merit which was granted by Her Majesty the Queen to each regiment in the Crimea to be bestowed on the officer considered most worthy to receive it for services during the war.

These, my too fugitive memories of the Crimea, are almost exhausted; but I retain an unpleasant remembrance of the frequent infliction of corporal punishment. I have seen three or four men at a "flogging parade," who had been sentenced for comparatively trivial offences to fifty or less lashes, tied up to the triangle and flogged before breakfast. And yet this degrading punishment did not prevent crime. It is my belief that there is less crime in the army now than in those days. Drinking was then heavier, and probably, in consequence, crimes of insubordination were more frequent.

My servant in the Crimea, Bob Blair, an excellent fellow in himself, had been convicted by court-martial of being drunk and of chasing the company colour-sergeant round the tents of the company with a drawn bayonet! He had been sentenced by court-martial to receive fifty lashes. Nobody seemed to think much about it, and he proved a perfectly quiet and faithful servant to me. During the many years that he

attended on me he never had a relapse, and I kept in touch with him for some time after his discharge, when he was the possessor, I think, of two Good Conduct badges.

The colonel commanding the regiment during the greater part of the war was, as I have said, Colonel Egerton, who was killed in the trenches. He had established a high reputation for himself and the regiment during the campaign, and his death was a loss, not only to the regiment, but to the army and to the country. He was succeeded by the senior major, Colonel R. J. Stratton, a strict disciplinarian, and wanting in some of the personal characteristics of his predecessor; but a good soldier of the old school, and a keen lover of the regiment.

On one occasion a soldier of the regiment was brought before him in the orderly room for threatening to take his life. "Begad, sir" (a favourite expression of the colonel), he said, "I have heard many a man say as much, but I have never found a man yet with the pluck to do it! Forty-eight hours' imprisonment with hard labour! March him out, sergeant-major!"

But the men, I believe, liked him. A soldier does not, or did not in those days, mind a little strong language. What they don't like is being sermonized. There is a story of a soldier who was brought before his commanding officer in the orderly room for being drunk. The good colonel was fond of lecturing a prisoner on his evil ways, and on this occasion, having delivered himself of his sermon, he said to the prisoner, "And now, my man, have you anything to say for

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yourself?" To which the prisoner, who had ~~stuffed~~<sup>stuffed</sup> much from the long harangue, replied, "No, ~~sir~~<sup>sir</sup>, I have nothing to say for myself, but you seem to have a *precious*\* lot to say for yourself!"

\* It is possible, and even probable, that a more forcibly expressive soldier's expletive was used, but there is no official record of this.



## CHAPTER II

### AUSTRALIA

Now that the war was over, we were all glad to get the orders to return home. We were fortunate in being detailed to embark on H.M. ship *The Queen*, one of the famous old three-deckers, of 120 guns, and flagship in the Mediterranean. She had, as escort and tug, the paddle-wheel frigate *Terrible*, 800 horse-power, the most powerful frigate of her day.

In addition to some 700 men of our regiment, our good ship carried about an equal number of the 90th Light Infantry, a detachment of 42nd Highlanders, and a battery of Royal Artillery, so that with the ship's crew we must have mustered well over 2000 men.

We came in for a bit of rough weather in the open water off Cape St. Vincent, and had to cast off our leader and make what way we could under sail; but arrived without incident at Portsmouth, where the regiment was quartered in the Clarence Barracks. As was the fashion in those days, we did not do a single day's work there that could, under any pretence, be called a training for war.

From Portsmouth we were moved to the Richmond Barracks, Dublin, and there our military

exercises were limited to a promenade parade or so called "Field Day," in the Phoenix Park, winding up with the inevitable "March Past."

My personal reminiscences of our stay in Dublin are limited to some practice in boxing with a professional, and to some single-stick practice in which I became fairly proficient, but which now appears to have dropped rather unaccountably out of fashion. I also remember to have enjoyed some good days with the Meath hounds. One little incident connected with the latter recurs to my memory. A brother subaltern, Philip Dauncey, and Captain Acton, who commanded the Light Company of the regiment, and myself were those who used to hunt. On one day, at a check after the hounds had got away from cover, we three were talking over the burst, and I innocently remarked that on the fox breaking cover I had taken a line that let me well in for the run, on which Acton said with a sneer, "Ah, I suppose you think that you would be a good man to follow!" As Captain Acton was popularly known as a bit of a fire-eater, and as having gone over to France to fight a duel, I did not pursue the subject.

On June 18, 1857, the regiment embarked for New South Wales at Kingston Harbour in two sailing ships, the head-quarters and the right wing in the *Orwell*, and the left wing in the *Palmerston*, both ships of Messrs. Green's well-known fleet.

The voyage lasted for three months, and was uneventful except for a tragic accident to the *Orwell*, resulting in the loss of an officer of the ship, of the

boatswain and of two of the crew, and of a man of the regiment.

I happened to be the subaltern of the watch on the morning of August 17, 1857, and was sitting on deck at early dawn chatting with the ship's officer on duty, Booth by name. He was making his last voyage, his mother being a widow and he her only child. Suddenly we heard the cry of "A man overboard!" always a fateful cry at sea, and to all on deck it came with a specially sinister significance, as there was a half-gale of wind blowing, with a heavy sea, and we were at the moment some hundreds of miles south of the Cape of Good Hope, in a latitude with an evil reputation among seamen. It appeared that the regimental carpenter, Taylor, was out on the yard-arm helping to take in sail, and was jerked overboard by a rope. He was never seen again.

The call to "Man the lifeboat" was readily responded to, and the volunteer crew headed by Booth, the officer of the watch above referred to, and the ship's boatswain, an old sailor by name Langden, were quickly on board the boat. Others, including myself, volunteered also to go, but the Captain (Morris) would not permit us to do so, and the order was given to "lower away." It is well known that a lifeboat will not sink, even when nearly full of water, but the danger of lowering a boat in a heavy sea and when the ship is under full sail is, that on touching the water the boat may be dragged by the lowering tackle and so swamped. The *Orwell's* boat, however, was fitted with a patent lowering apparatus called the

“Clifford,” intended to free the tackle automatically as soon as the boat touched the water.

Unfortunately the tackle fouled in lowering, and the boat at once filled with water. The old boatswain, seeing what had happened, seized the ship’s rope with a view, no doubt, to hauling himself back on board hand over hand; but the ship was rolling heavily, and the unfortunate man, after being swung with great force several times against the side of the ship, was at length obliged to let go his hold of the rope; he fell into the sea and was soon drifted far astern.

By this time the boat with her hapless crew of the young ship’s officer and four sailors, had entirely parted company with the ship.

All hands were now on deck, as well as all the officers of the wing, and our attention was for the moment rivetted on the old boatswain, who could be seen far astern, and though hampered by heavy clothing, was swimming bravely, but vainly, for hope of rescue there was none, and already the ill-omened albatross were circling over his head in anticipation of a victim. To add to the deep pathos of the scene the boatswain’s young son “Jack,” some thirteen years old and a great favourite on board, was running frantically up and down the deck, crying piteously, “Oh, save my father!”

But the poor man was beyond all help. He was much esteemed by all on board. He was an excellent sailor, and had been for thirty years in Messrs. Green’s service, who, after their usual generous custom, undertook, I believe, the provision of his wife and family.

Every effort was now made to regain touch with the boat. The ordinary method of tacking was deemed impracticable, owing to the strong wind and the heavy sea, and moreover unsuitable on account of the long detour that the ship would have to make; Captain Morris accordingly determined to wear the ship, or bring her round away from the wind.

This is a difficult matter in a heavy sea, especially as the crew were now short of hands, but we gave what help we could and the ship was brought round, and after a long and anxious period the boat was again sighted. On approaching her we could see that she was half full of water and that her rudder had been carried away, but the young ship's officer was at his post at the helm and keeping the boat's head up to the wind with an oar. The ship was run down to leeward of the boat, the sails backed, and ropes were ready to get into touch with her; but the wind was so strong that the ship at once drifted away from the boat and we were separated again.

The same manœuvre was repeated for three successive times, but with the same result. At the second meeting the brave young officer was seen still at his post at the helm, but dead from cold and exhaustion. The fate of the remnant of the crew, now reduced to three sailors, seemed more and more hopeless.

Our regimental paymaster, Captain John Scott, formerly of The Buffs, who was a strong swimmer, volunteered to swim off from the ship at the next meeting with the boat and endeavour to reach her with a rope; but the ship's officers were unanimous

in the opinion that such an attempt in so heavy a sea must fail, and would probably only add more to the already heavy loss of brave men.

There remained then one more chance, though it sounded as but a counsel of despair.

At the suggestion of, I believe, the chief officer, Mr. Lake, Captain Morris decided that the only reasonable chance of saving any of the three survivors of the boat's crew was to run the ship down on the boat and pick up the men from the water. Orders for this were accordingly given. The moment was an anxious one. As we neared the boat for the last time we could see that she was nearly full of water and that one of the crew, a Swede, had replaced the brave young ship's officer at the helm, and was doing what he could with an oar to keep the boat's head up to the wind. Ropes were kept ready to throw to the boat, and our paymaster, Captain Scott, and myself, were fastened by ropes to the thwarts of the ship to leeward, and provided with ropes to throw to the survivors.

As the ship struck the boat, the Swede sailor was able to seize a rope let down from the bow of the ship and to haul himself hand over hand on board without assistance. The boat then drifted down to leeward of the ship, and as she passed we succeeded in getting hold of one of the two men still left in the boat; but the boat continued to drift away, and we shouted loudly to the last man to jump into the water. Had he done so at once I believe that we could have saved him, but he hesitated, and when he jumped he was out of our reach and sank before our eyes.

Thus ended a tragic episode that had lasted for seven hours, and will not be readily forgotten by any who witnessed it.

The vitality of the Swede who was saved was remarkable, having been for this long period exposed to the wind and cold of an Antarctic sea, and yet he arrived on deck practically none the worse for what he had endured.

A subscription of £120 was raised from the nineteen officers of the regiment on board, of which £10 was given to each of the two men who were saved, and £100 remitted to Messrs. Green, the owners of the *Orwell*, to be applied for the benefit of the boatswain's son. We heard afterwards that he was duly educated, and eventually became an officer in Messrs. Green's service.

The rest of our voyage was uneventful, but it ended in rather a dramatic fashion. As we neared the entrance to Sydney harbour, we sighted a ship ahead of us, and we made all sail to get the lead. After an exciting contest we were beaten by a tack, and we found to our great surprise that our rival in the race was none other than our sister ship, the *Palmerston*, that carried our left wing, and which we had not sighted since we left Kingstown harbour in company three months before.

Thus the regiment was enabled to land together, and was received with a very warm welcome by our colonial kinsfolk, partly due, perhaps, to something of the heroic halo that clings round a regiment recently engaged on active service.

There seemed at that moment little chance of our

seeing any active work in the field again for many years ; and to those of us who had tasted something of the fascination of practical soldiering, the prospect of barrack square duty in a colony for seven or eight years was not inspiring.

We found, however, not a few redeeming points. The people were most kindly disposed towards us. We played cricket with the Sydney eleven, then a rather embryo team, who, as I remember, took off their shoes to field, and hardly gave promise of developing into the Australian team that of later years has played and defeated an All England eleven. A Sussex professional, named Gilbert, had lately come out as coach, and later on Coffyn, one of the cracks of the Surrey eleven, was engaged, and coached the colonial team for many years.

We, therefore, soon became reconciled to our temporary exile. We danced, and fell in love, more or less discreetly, with the fair colonists, with the result that it was not long before two charming brides had been added to our social circle, and our gallant colonel, himself a confirmed old bachelor, was heard muttering, "If this sort of thing goes on we shall have to close the officers' mess."

The dowry of one of our brides was, I remember, rather markedly colonial, consisting mainly of some hundred horses in the bush and on the prairie, with the sole condition that they had to be caught.

The natural beauties of Port Jackson and its exceptional qualities as a harbour for ships of all classes are well known, and are, I believe, rivalled by one harbour only in the world, that of Rio Janeiro.



The roadstead is, indeed, nothing less than an inland lake, with a completely land-locked entrance; the deep green of the gum trees growing down to the water's edge making an appropriate frame to the picture. But this fair haven has its mischievous side, being subject to sudden and severe squalls of wind, of which I had a somewhat unpleasant experience. My brother subaltern of the Grenadier company, Charlie Knowles, who was a bit of a sailor, had taken me with him in a small sailing boat for a visit to the hospital at the north end of the harbour. We had a pleasant trip there, and had started on our return journey, when one of these untimely squalls set in. There was, unfortunately, no ballast in the boat, and there was a good prospect of our frail bark being capsized, in which case one result would have been that these memories would never have seen the light; but by skilful seamanship on the part of my mate, and by using an oar to keep the boat up to the wind, we contrived to reach the shore in safety, and received the congratulations of the boatmen, who had recognized the danger of our position.

We had by now settled down very contentedly to the prospect of a term of colonial service, which had indeed much to recommend itself to all but the very keen soldiers; some of us had formed plans for an exploration of the interior of the continent, with a view to making acquaintance with "the bush," and with the prospect of a possible kangaroo hunt, when orders came for the regiment to embark at once for India, to assist in extinguishing the dying embers of the Mutiny.

We left the colony with regret, tempered by the hope of being in time to see a little active work. As it turned out, we were the last British regiment to serve in Australia.

Our course to India took us through the Straits of Malacca and the Torres Straits, and we fortunately put in at Madeira at the opportune moment of a public ball, to which the regiment and the ship's officers received an invitation.

The recollection of a very pleasant evening still lingers in my memory, and I can only hope that our fair Dutch colonial hosts retained as favourable an impression of their guests as we did of them.

By the time that we entered the river Hoogly we found, with mixed feelings, that the Mutiny had been practically quelled, and Cawnpore avenged.

The regiment was directed to proceed to Dumdum, a few miles out from Calcutta, there to await further orders.

## CHAPTER III

### TIGER SHOOTING IN INDIA

ON awaking the next morning we were shocked to hear the sad news that our colonel (Colonel R. J. Stratton, C.B.), whom we had left the previous day on board ship apparently in perfectly good health, had died during the night.

It appeared that he had been occupied the greater part of the previous day (the middle of the Indian hot weather), in superintending the disembarkation of the regiment, wearing full dress scarlet uniform. He had complained of feeling the heat, and must have sustained a sunstroke, for he was taken ill in the evening when the regiment landed, and died of heart rupture that night.

It was indeed what might well be called a tragic end to the career of a soldier who had fought under the colours of the regiment through a European war, had succeeded to the command of the regiment, the fulfilment of his heart's desire, and who died in harness, doing his duty to the last in the service of the regiment.

I have already made some slight reference to the character of our colonel, but I would add without

hesitation that every man in the regiment lamented his loss. He was a thorough 77th man, deeply imbued with the belief that no regiment ever did, or ever could, equal his beloved "Pothooks"; a faith which, when firmly and honestly held by a commander, inspires those under his command with a happy sense of their superiority and makes a regiment invincible.

It was not long before the regiment was moved from Dumdum to Fort William in Calcutta. It was then that I made a first effort to gain some acquaintance with Eastern language and literature.

I had always had a love of languages, as a knowledge of them seemed to be the key that opens the door to the minds of the great thinkers of all ages and all nationalities, and which, moreover, from a more practical standpoint, smooths the road for the traveller and the explorer, doubles the depth of his purse, and often, as I can vouch from personal experience, converts casual acquaintanceship into lasting friendship.

Though a poor classic at Rugby I could have enjoyed my Virgil and even my Livy had they not been presented to me in the light of school books. Homer I always regarded with a respectful, though rather distant, admiration; but Horace, whom I early learned to love, continued to be for many years my constant pocket-companion.

I commenced my study of the Orientals with a rather curious and foolish blunder. The book on which I made my maiden effort was the only too well-known Urdu text-book, the "Bagh-o-Bahar"

("Garden and Spring"). I had mastered the fact that the Oriental book begins at the place that in our Western literature we are pleased to call the end, and I drew, as I thought, the logical deduction that the story should commence at the bottom of our last page. I therefore looked out all the words on the last page carefully in my dictionary, but was surprised to find that I could make no meaning of them. I accordingly greeted my Munshi (native tutor) on his arrival with, "Your language must be a very curious one, Munshi, for I have found the meaning of all the words in the first page and can make no sense of them!" My Munshi, much amused, showed me my mistake, and I soon began to make fair progress in my Oriental studies.

There are, I think, some interesting, if rather speculative, thoughts connected with the two opposite systems of orthography in use by the people of the East and of the West. Is it not possible that they are indicative, to a certain extent, of the characteristics of the Aryan and the Semitic races; the outward motion from the body indicating the expansive and progressive spirit of the West, whilst the inward movement towards the body may be taken as expressing the more reactionary and retrogressive characteristics of the East? It should, however, be noticed in this connection that whereas the ancient Greeks, in the heroic days of Greece, are said to have written as do the Orientals from right to left; they, now that the nation has ceased to have any political ascendancy, follow the orthography of the West.

I soon became interested in my Oriental studies,

and with the aid of my excellent Munshi overcame the difficulties common to all beginners in the study of the Eastern classics; and having passed the examination in the higher standard, I was appointed interpreter to the regiment, an office that in a British regiment involved practically but little extra work, and which brought a useful additional one hundred rupees a month to my pay.

It was not long before the regiment received orders to proceed up country, where some flickering embers of the Mutiny were still in existence.

My inches had secured my being posted as ensign to the Grenadier Company of the regiment, which, in those days, had the privilege of heading the regiment on the line of march and of taking post as the right company in line.

The senior major of the regiment, the Hon. Augustus Chichester, had succeeded our late colonel in the command of the regiment. He possessed many of the qualities essential for the making of a good commanding officer. In person he was an exceptionally striking personality. Tall and slight in figure, with a soldierly bearing, sharply cut features, and a pair of brown piercing eyes. He had passed his early years of service in the Coldstream Guards, but had exchanged to us from the 87th regiment as a major. He was thus under the disadvantage, if disadvantage it be, of not having been reared in the regiment that he was to command. This would naturally tend to make a man less sympathetic with regimental traditions and customs. He was, however, an excellent soldier, as soldiering was then estimated, being a first-

rate drill, and having a keen eye for an unpolished button. He was, moreover, a strict but just disciplinarian, and took a pride in making the regiment thoroughly up-to-date whether in barracks or on the parade ground.

The colonel was certainly a terror to those who failed in a manoeuvre in the field or at drill. He rode in the old cavalry style of balance, but with great nerve, and to see him flying down on some unfortunate company commander, arms and legs extended, with a "Good Heavens, sir, where *are* you going to?" or "Why don't you move, sir?" was certainly a trial to weak nerves. There was a legend current in the regiment that on one such occasion the unlucky victim, with more sense of the humorous than of the discreet, on seeing the coming assault promptly gave the word, "Prepare to receive cavalry!"

He was never, I think, quite in touch with the officers of the regiment; due, perhaps, partly to his early associations as a guardsman, and partly to the fact that, both our majors being married men, there was no link, so to speak, between him and the rest of the officers.

He would, however, unbend when not on duty, and join us in a game of pool, in which he was an expert, and would tell us stories of his early days and of certain frivolities of which he was the hero; such as being one of five who sat up all one night playing whist, the odd man taking it in turn to get a spell of sleep; or of his feat when quartered in Dublin of walking down Sackville Street smoking three cigars between the fingers of one hand.

It is hardly surprising, perhaps, that our gallant commander gained the sobriquet of "Jingles" among our irreverent subalterns.

The colonel was an inveterate smoker. It is, indeed, much to be feared that this habit contributed to the disease that was eventually the cause of his death.

A little incident will give an idea of the extent to which he was a slave to tobacco. One night, when the regiment was at Bareilly, a fire broke out in the mess-house. Word was sent to the colonel, who was in bed and asleep. The first words that he spoke, when informed of the accident, were to his native servant: "*Arg lao*" (Indice, "Bring fire"). He was soon at the mess-house, cheroot in mouth, directing the arrangements for extinguishing the fire.

Personally I was always on the best of terms with our good commander, principally perhaps because I was fond of drill, and was not very often caught napping on parade, and so was appointed brigade-major to the brigade that he afterwards commanded at Peshawur.

I am proud to have his photograph now in my circle of old soldier-friends on my mantelpiece.

Our stay at Calcutta was not a long one, and we were glad, I think, when the order came for the regiment to move up country.

Our first impressions of an Indian station were not very happy ones. The right wing of the regiment, to which my company belonged, was ordered to Ghazeepur, whilst the left wing and head-quarters went to Benares.



We arrived at our station in March, 1860, in the cholera season, and found the 37th Regiment, which was then under orders to return to England, detained at the station, stricken with this epidemic, which very soon attacked our ranks also. The two regiments lost over two hundred men and one officer, the quartermaster of the regiment, in a few weeks, my own company, the Grenadiers, also suffering very heavily.

In December of the same year the whole regiment was united at Hazaribagh ("a thousand gardens").

Hazaribagh is a pleasantly situated station in the Chota Nagpore District, some two thousand feet above the sea. The station, besides having an equable climate, possessed many attractions for the sportsman, and it was here that I made my first acquaintance with Indian shikar.

Bears were reported to be within a day's march of our barracks, and a brother subaltern, Jock Skene, and I were soon on our way to verify the report. By sitting up on a moonlight night we managed to bag our first bear, and having heard or read that a bear's paws are considered a culinary delicacy, we gave orders to our Madras boy, valet and cook, to serve a paw at our breakfast. When, however, it arrived, it had so ghastly a resemblance to a man's hand that we did not venture on tasting its edible qualities. A bowl of bear-soup was then tried for lunch, but rejected as tasting too much of bear's grease.

Leopards were also known to be in the neighbourhood, but I did not have the good fortune to encounter one. The leopard, as is well known, is more active and more ready to take the offensive

than a tiger; but the colonel commanding the district, a keen sportsman, whose name I regret I cannot recall, showed how a bold front and a resolute offensive is as effective in the jungle as on the battle-field.

The story as it came to us is as follows:—The colonel was strolling through the jungle one evening with a pet spaniel, when a leopard sprang out of a thick place in the bush and carried off the dog. The colonel had only a riding-cane or switch in his hand, but he walked straight up to the leopard and struck it with the cane across the eyes. The leopard dropped the dog and bolted into the jungle, and the dog was, I believe, not much the worse for its rough experience.

We were not left very long to enjoy this pleasant little station, for in less than two years we were again raising the dust, tramping along the Grand Trunk Road.

I should like to be able to express in words something of the feelings that might probably impress a home-bred sportsman on his first introduction to an Indian jungle, when he finds himself—to take a liberty with “Evangeline”—

“In the forest primeval,  
Where the murmuring pines and the teak trees  
Stand like giants of old.”

He would surely experience a novel sense of freedom of movement, of limitless space, of all sorts of possibilities of sport, no troublesome boundaries, no peddling little considerations as to how the beat shall be conducted with due regard to your neighbour's reserves, no anxious moments as to whether the

cock-pheasant that has rocketted over the firs will fall on your own land or on Farmer Jones' potato-field, no gun licences, no closed season ; you are free to do as you will, and go when and where you wish without question. And then the game ! It is no longer a question of so many brace of pheasants or of partridges in the bag, so many hares or rabbits, with a woodcock perhaps once or twice in a season, but a practically unlimited assortment of winged and four-footed game for the gun, and for the rifle anything from a mouse-deer to a tiger or an elephant. But is it not hot ? Hot, yes, certainly it is hot if you look at a thermometer ; but who thinks of the heat in the jungle, with a good *solah tope* (sun hat) on the head and a gun or rifle in the hand, or in that of the faithful *shikari* at your heels ? Indeed, for some game—tigers, for instance—the hotter the day the better the chance of sport, as it is in the hottest part of the day that the tiger is often to be found in the bush near a water-stream.

And here I would offer a brief account of my first interview with a Bengal tiger “at home.”

There are certain episodes, certain momentous moments in, I suppose, every man's life which are not readily forgotten, such as one's first day at school, and, for those who have had the unfortunate experience, one's first private interview with the headmaster in his study. Then may come the first voyage, and to a soldier the first donning of the King's uniform, and later perhaps the first whizz or thud of a hostile bullet, then might come the first love affair, and perhaps later still one's first trip in an aeroplane.

All these sights and scenes seem engraved in the

memory, and will be recalled to mind from time to time ; but I doubt if any are more clearly remembered in after years than the first view of a royal Bengal tiger, face to face, on his own ground in an Indian jungle. I, at least, have found it so.

The occasion was as follows : The regiment was *en route* on the Grand Trunk Road from Hazaribagh to Secunderabad, and was encamped from Saturday to Monday at one of the usual halting-places. A brother subaltern, Randle Jackson, a keen sportsman, and I, determined that it was a good opportunity to try for a little *shikar*. We accordingly got together a few beaters and made a plunge into the jungle some distance from camp.

I was carrying a single-barrel muzzle-loading rifle, with which I used to break bottles at a hundred yards at home for practice, and had just fired a shot at a peacock flying overhead in the glory of full plumage, which went on untouched, and was some distance in front of my companion, when I noticed a movement in the dense jungle in front of me, as if some large animal was working its way through.

I imagined for a moment that it would be a stray cow from a neighbouring village, such as are often found grazing in the jungle ; but to my great astonishment, and somewhat qualified delight, a full-grown Bengal tiger, such as I had last seen in the Regent's Park Zoo, stalked quietly, I might almost say solemnly, out into the open, full in my front.

On seeing me and the native gun-bearer he turned his head slightly towards us, and with something between a grunt and a growl moved steadily on

without deigning to hasten his steps, evidently regarding us rather as intruders in his forest domain than as serious enemies; in another moment he had disappeared in the dense jungle.

I ran back to my companion and said, rather excitedly I expect, "Jackson, I have seen a tiger!" It was long before he would believe that I was not joking, and his incredulity had such a comical effect on me that I began to laugh, which again increased his unbelief. At last he was convinced that I was in earnest, and like two foolish schoolboys, as indeed we were, we started off with our small band of natives to follow the tiger up.

Fortunately, perhaps, for us all, we did not find the tiger, and equally fortunate, it was, no doubt, that the tiger did not find us. It was also, I may add, as well that I had not a loaded rifle or a breech-loader in my hand when the tiger appeared, as I should probably have fired at him on his first appearance, and had the shot not proved fatal he would very probably have charged, and would have found his opponent helpless with an unloaded rifle.

Later, when a little more experienced in jungle craft, I should have known that a tiger coming towards the gun will, if wounded, almost certainly charge, whereas if wounded after passing the gun, he will seldom, if ever, turn back to attack.

On our return to camp our little adventure with the tiger caused no small stir amongst our sportsmen, and as the natives reported that a man-eating tiger frequented the district, a party of three arranged to go out that evening, and to try their luck in a

“machan” (a rough platform constructed in a tree), and with a goat tied up as a bait, and as the party was to consist of three guns, the machan was made of two stories, so to speak, one above the other. The night-watchers took their stations, one above and the other two below. About the middle of the night, when the watchers had become somewhat drowsy waiting for the tiger that never came, the upper platform suddenly gave way and the occupant came tumbling down on those below. For a moment all was confusion, the impression being, as one of the party afterwards confessed, that the tiger had jumped into the tree! I need hardly add that the vigil proved fruitless.

I was not, however, inclined to give up our first tiger without another attempt, and so returned to the spot the next evening; and having tied up the goat in an open place, took post myself on a rock commanding the spot and watched, my single-barrel rifle in hand, for the coming of the tiger.

I am almost ashamed to confess that after some hours of watching I fell asleep, and on waking at early dawn I was surprised, and not a little disgusted, to see that the goat had disappeared. It afterwards occurred to me that it was fortunate for me that the tiger had contented himself with taking the goat in preference to the watcher. But there was a further disappointment awaiting me. I had arranged for my Madrassee “boy” (as Madras men-servants are called, irrespective of age) to bring me out some breakfast at daylight, and I awaited expectantly his arrival. But the sun was now well up, and I began to cast about

in my mind how I could extemporize a morning meal.

I noticed a number of birds about the size of a thrush hopping about around me, but how to convert one of them into a morning meal was the problem. I had only my single-barrel rifle with me, and, of course, no small shot. However, I remembered that people in story-books, in my position, are not supposed to be disheartened by such little difficulties, and as I was also getting hungry, I set to work with a pocket-knife to cut up a bullet into something like a charge of small shot, a laborious process. This was at last accomplished after a fashion, and having loaded the rifle I proceeded to carefully stalk one of the plumpest-looking of these little birds. I aimed and fired that shot with the most careful precision, and was more than disgusted when that little bird flew away unharmed. Fortunately, just at that moment my boy's welcome face appeared on the crest of the hill, and my anxieties for my morning meal were ended.

On my return to camp I had to acknowledge another fruitless night's work. It subsequently came to my ears that some hypersceptical spirits in camp suggested that the loss of the goat might be attributed, not to the tiger but to the coolies (native carriers) with me. I stand stoutly for the story of the tiger, but the evidence, which is of course entirely presumptive, is now before the reader, and he will draw his own conclusions, remembering that the Indian villager is very seldom a thief, and that he has an hereditary respect both for the *sahib* and for the tiger.

It was not until some years after this that I was able to include a tiger's skin among my shikar trophies, and it was obtained under very different circumstances.

It will, I suppose, be generally admitted that, as sport with the rifle, the pursuit of the larger carnivora, the lion and the tiger, may be allowed the first place. Of the former I have no experience, and of the latter I cannot claim any very exceptional knowledge for an Indian sportsman. I have, however, been keenly devoted to the sport, and have enjoyed the rather unusual advantage for a British officer of some knowledge of the native language, which together with a study of the natural habits of the quarry are essential conditions for success.

Perhaps the first point that comes home to one in the study of the animal creation is the strong individuality of race.

It will be noticed in a litter of puppies, a brood of chickens, and I venture to say in a nest of spiders and a colony of ants, and certainly among the humble earth-worm fraternity, as Darwin has so graphically pictured for us. Among all these, if patiently observed, the spirit of individuality will be found manifest. Among the higher mammalia it is naturally more prominent, and tigers form no exception to the rule. For in a district where tigers abound, each individual is locally known by some marked individual characteristic, such as "the savage one," "the big one," "the coward," and so forth.

I have known a tiger with the latter reputation so little feared in the district, that when it may have



killed a village cow or goat the women and children of the village would turn out and drive it off its prey with stones and tom-toms, whereas in the case of a tiger of a known savage disposition, no one would walk alone after dark along a path in the jungle in the vicinity of the part haunted by it.

As a further instance of the varying disposition of the tiger, I remember being a guest one day when on a shooting excursion in the Central Provinces, of a forest officer, and as I sat at tiffin (luncheon) in his wooden house or hut I felt something under the table that I took to be a dog, and gave it a friendly hint with my foot to move, when to my surprise out marched, quite quietly and in friendly fashion, a fine young tigress, nearly full grown. She had been brought up in the house as a cub, and was called Mabel.

Mabel was quite gentle and well-disposed towards Europeans, but strange to say was always hostile towards natives; and in consequence my host was called on by the local magistrate to keep her in confinement, and Mabel was accordingly transferred to a cage in the local Zoo.

My host was himself a keen sportsman, and used to say that he would guarantee to have a tiger driven by his forest-men right under a given tree in the jungle, so well were they acquainted with the habits and habitat of the tigers in the district.

There are more ways than one in carrying out the sport of tiger shikar which I may briefly allude to. *In primis* is the sporting, though rather risky method, of shooting on foot, the tiger having been

marked down or believed to be in a certain part of the jungle. A number of beaters armed with sticks and stones and above all tom-toms (a sort of village drum) are marshalled at a suitable point in the cover, much as when one is arranging a drive in a covert at home for small game, and put under the charge of the head shikari, while the sportsman or sportsmen proceed quietly to some spot in the jungle previously selected and take up their station behind a rock or tree or bush, and await the appearance of the tiger, an anxious moment.

Sometimes a *machan*, a rough platform of pieces of the forest wood, is made beforehand for the sportsmen. So far all is simple and safe, for the tiger will scarcely ever break back through the beating of the tom-toms and the crowd of shouting and hooting beaters, among whom even boys may be found. But if when wounded it is desired to follow him up, the danger begins.

It is generally desirable to leave a wounded tiger till the next day, when the wound may make it stiff and unwilling to charge; but if it is determined to do so at once, the following precautions should be carefully observed. The shikari or tracker should lead the way, closely followed by the gun, and the advance through the jungle following the track or trace of blood must be very slow, whilst on both flanks natives should be employed to throw stones in very thick bushes that might hold the tiger, and men should climb the trees on either side to try and get sight of him before he should charge. The above may be thought tedious and troublesome, but a

wounded tiger is a very dangerous animal to deal with, and most shikar accidents have been caused by neglect of such precautions as the above.

Indeed, when every precautionary measure has been taken, there is always the possibility of some mischance occurring with more or less serious consequences. For example, when on a shooting expedition by myself in the North-West Provinces I had received (khabar) news of a pair of tigers frequenting the jungle not far from the village where I had pitched my camp, and I determined to go and look them up the next day.

Accordingly soon after dawn my shikari had assembled a motley crew of the villagers armed with sticks and the usual proportion of tom-toms, an inferior species of kettle-drum, excluding boys, who are, strange to say, often willing to join in the beat for the sake of a few pice.

We beat the jungle that day without moving the tigers until the evening. I had taken up a position on some rocks just over the dry bed of a stream, and had almost given up hopes of any sport that day when I noticed a movement in the bushes to my right, and presently a tigress appeared creeping down the watercourse. I covered the tigress with my rifle and when she was right in front of me pulled the trigger, but no report followed. The tigress heard the click of the rifle, looked up angrily and then quickened her pace, and as she was disappearing in the bush I fired my other barrel, a snap shot, which I thought must have missed, as when I went down to the spot where she passed as I fired, I

found the mark of a bullet on a stone. I came home disappointed, but determined to have another try to come to terms with the tigers the next day. The morrow, therefore, at early dawn saw us again in the same jungle, but with a slightly different plan of campaign.

After consultation with my shikari I determined to go myself with my gun-bearers to the further end of the jungle, whilst the "honk" should drive what game there was towards me. Nothing was seen of the tiger, and I proceeded with my shikari and the guns to a place in the jungle which seemed favourable for my purpose. It commanded on one flank the almost dry channel of a fresh stream, and in front had a fairly free field of fire. My ladder not having arrived I selected a tree, suitably placed, and climbed up to an overhanging branch, on which I perched myself, the shikari being close at hand. I may mention that although a tiger cannot spring upwards quite as nimbly as a cat, yet it can, by rearing itself on its hind legs, use its claws very effectively within a limit of some 12 to 15 feet. Hence a bough to be a safe refuge should be nearly 20 feet from the ground. My bough fulfilled these conditions, but as I was simply balanced on this bough, I had to instruct my shikari to seize my feet firmly when I was about to fire, and so prevent my toppling over, perhaps on top of my tiger.

But I had not secured myself very long before on looking up the dry bed of the stream I saw a tiger coming quietly down towards me, looking occasionally rather angrily towards the direction

where he could hear the shouting of the men and the noise of the tom-toms.

When he was about 100 paces from my tree I covered him carefully and fired. My shot told, and with an angry roar he came on down to the bank of the stream and began to clamber with some difficulty up the bank. I fired again, and this time looking up he recognized his enemies and charged bravely up to the base of the tree in which we were; he now saw us and seemed to gnash his teeth with impotent rage at his fruitless efforts to get at us, till a shot through the brain gave him his quietus.

We could now distinguish the voices of the beaters as they drew near, and we shouted to them, "We have got the tiger." To our surprise the reply came, "Hum log ko bhi sher milla" (We also have got a tiger), and so it proved.

My shot of the previous evening had passed through the tiger's body; she had gone down to the stream to quench her thirst and had been found there dead the next morning.

I have heard it said that, in a club "there is no greater bore than a Bengal civilian who has killed his tiger." I do not wish to be numbered among such a fraternity, and my excuse for adding one more tiger story is, that it exemplifies the faithful and loyal regard for duty that so characterizes the East Indian employé.

It is as follows. I was, as above described, moving through a jungle to find a position for the gun whilst the beaters were forming up behind me. The jungle was dense and we were all obliged to

move in Indian file, the man carrying my ladder being in the rear. His name, for he was well deserving a name, was, let us say, Rambuxsh. When we had arrived at a suitable spot for the gun I sent for the ladder, and was told that Rambuxsh had not come up. I said, "Never mind, I must do without the ladder." I waited accordingly where I was, but the drive proved a blank. As the men came up I heard them say that "Rambuxsh has been killed and carried off by the tiger, and we have found his hair and blood on the spot." I said, "Let us go and see." I went and found distinctly a man's hair and blood on the track by which we had come, but I also noticed that there were no signs of my ladder. So I suggested to the men, "If the tiger has killed and swallowed or carried off Rambuxsh, it couldn't very well have swallowed or carried off the ladder; so let us have another drive for him!" This was done, but with no result, and I began to fear that the case was hopeless.

I remember sitting down and lighting my pipe for some sort of consolation, when I heard the voices of my men shouting, "Rambuxsh is all right. He is in — village." I said at once, "Let us go and see." We went and found the poor fellow lying on a bed. On being questioned as to what had happened, he said that "a bear had jumped on him in the jungle."

What really had happened was, I imagine, as follows. It is probable that the tiger was on our flank as we filed up through the thick undergrowth, but it would not attack so many. But Rambuxsh

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carrying the ladder had lingered behind; becoming separated from the others, the tiger sprang on him, but the ladder had saved him from the tiger's claws, and on it falling had scared the tiger and Rambuxsh was able to escape. But the point of the story is that when he, Rambuxsh, had so fortunately escaped with his life, he should have had the fidelity to carry off the ladder that the Sahib had entrusted to him, my little shikar ladder for mounting trees.

## CHAPTER IV

(1860 to 1886)

### A TRIP TO CHYNEPORE

Kurtree,  
Jungle, 3 cose from Chynepore,  
October 8, 1860.

(WHEN A SUBALTERN)

*To my Mother*

HAVING got ten days' leave at the beginning of the cold weather I determined to take my tent, dogs and guns and stop a week in the thick jungle in the Kymoor Hills, distance about forty miles from our station. I started off my tent and heavy baggage at noon the day before in a bullock cart, the dogs being in a small square charpai (four-footed rope bedstead) at the back of the cart, and covered with an awning (waterproof), the sun being still very hot and there being some chance of a shower of rain. I myself started the next day at noon in a palky. Our station is on the Ganges, so I embarked palky, myself and all on one of the very antediluvian looking boats in use all over India, I believe, and dropped down the river for a mile or two.

It was a fine evening at the close of the rains, the only time in the year that you can say that there is



a sunset in this usually cloudless skyed firmament. It is only about the time of the rains that there are any clouds to give those wonderfully tinted shades of colouring so common in our own dear damp country. The sun in India for half the months of the year seems to hasten out of sight as quickly and as quietly as possible, as if half wearied with, and half ashamed of, his hot, mischievous day's work. At home he appears to sink almost reluctantly, and to linger joyously among the beauties of his own making. This evening, however, there could no fault be found with the beauty of dear Dame Nature. The fields were looking green and flourishing, the long thin grass was glistening like floss silk in the sheen of the last rays of the sun, and the villager returning home from his day's work, which just supplies him with his daily subsistence, appeared the only created thing not giving joyful praise to its Creator. My men were soon taking my palky along a not very good road at the rate of about four and a half miles an hour. The pace at which they can step along with these rather cumbrous and heavy conveyances is wonderful. A palky is a sedan chair made to lie down in, instead of to sit in. It is so heavy when empty that it is as much as two strong Europeans can do to raise it and carry it a few yards; yet four natives of small size and very small muscular development (they are all of one caste) will carry a heavy man one chowky (ten miles) in less than three hours.

It being a fine moonlight night I got out of the palky to try their pace. I walked pretty nearly as fast as I could, and am persuaded that their usual

pace on a good road must be at least five miles an hour. They would not do five miles in an hour, as they stop a few seconds about every 250 yards to shift the pole of the palky from one shoulder to the other. I caught up my bullock cart about half-way to our destination, and was received with barks of joy from my dogs (three imported English spaniels), and rather hopeless looks and speeches from the bullocks and drivers respecting the road having become very bad and the bullocks tired. I stopped my palky, and with my men helped the cart along the worst part of the road, then left them and came on quickly and arrived at the indigo factory of Mr. — at about two hours after sunrise.

The well-known character of indigo planters for hospitality, ready-handed and open-hearted, makes it unnecessary for me to state to any one who knows India that I was received more as an expected friend than as an unknown stranger. To show the true nature of their hospitality, I may mention that I was for nearly two days in the house without, as I afterwards found out, my host knowing the name of his guest. It was through a mistake on my part that he did not know it; but I do not regret it, as it serves to show the entirely impartial nature of the kindness I received. This extended not only to the ordinary courtesy of a host to a guest, but a shooting excursion was got up and a good deal of time given up to me and mine at a time when the work in the factory was unusually heavy. Everybody knows the extremely fickle character of an indigo planter's prosperity, caused principally by the fact that indigo, to come to

perfection, requires rain at a particular season of the year, and that this rain must neither be too plentiful nor too scanty. A few showers for a day or two, then a day or two of sunshine, is what is wanted, but so seldom had. The gain is so enormous to any planter who is happy enough to hit off the exact medium between showers and sunshine, that two or three such seasons are said to make a man's fortune. Artificial irrigation is of no use. Water lying on the soil rots the roots of the plants.

An indigo factory at work is well worth visiting. The first process is carried on in two rows of large vats made of bricks and covered with a waterproof plaster called "pukka." One row of vats is on a lower level than the other, and they communicate by a drain at the bottom of the upper one. The indigo is brought in just as it is cut in bunches about three or four feet high, and is thrown into the upper vats and arranged neatly standing on end; a frame-work is placed over it and heavy planks of timber running in slides serve as weights to press it. Water is then let in by drains constructed for the purpose, and communicating with a well or any other supply of water. The indigo is allowed to soak thus for eighteen or twenty-four hours, the colour coming away and draining to the vats below. When this becomes full ten men are put into it in two rows, five in each row, facing each other, armed with a stick broad at one end with which they strike the mass of blue water in a peculiar manner, which has the effect of causing the colouring matter of the indigo to sink to the bottom and to flow away into a drain below, from which it is

carried in round earthen pots to the boiling house, and after being boiled down to a certain consistency is pressed.

The owner of the factory is a sportsman and can show the skin of many a large bear and the antlers of many a fine deer, the fruit of his rifle; and yet his whole establishment shows more plainly than most that a sportsman need by no means be a cruel or hard-hearted man. My own belief is that, taking more interest in animals from the nature of their pursuit, sportsmen are as a rule more alive to their dumb fellow creatures, and more willing to assist them than your drawing-room exquisite, who would be shocked at the idea of killing a deer, but who has no objection to eating the venison. I know whether I should prefer, if my walk of life had been canine, to be a sportsman's hound or a fair lady's lap-dog, not forgetting the difference between velvet cushions and a straw-strewn floor; and who ever saw a sportsman with a singing bird shut up in a cage? But to return.

This savage sportsman had no less than five tame deer (not tame in the sense of the poor birds, afore-said, who occasionally to prove their tameness beat their poor little hearts out against the bars of the cage), but so tame that they would come into the room at dinner-time, and unless you took some notice of them would soon make their presence known by rubbing their noses against you and refusing to be satisfied without the accustomed bit of bread or biscuit. One that was given to his present master by a native was so faithfully fond of

his first friends that nothing would keep him at his new home; he would break or manage to get loose from the strongest ropes, and even chains, and go straight back to his first owner.

The hills called Kymoor Range, which are covered with a very thick jungle, and in which there are plenty of deer of all kinds, peacocks, partridges, and quail on the skirts of it, and many a tiger and bear and leopard in the thicker parts, is about three miles from the indigo factory.

We went up there one morning to try if we could meet with anything. We were placed (three guns) on the slope of a hill which commanded the pass into the lower range of hills by which it was probable that whatever was started would try and make its way. The position was exciting enough, as there was no saying what might make its appearance, from a tiger to a quail. Some sixteen or twenty men were sent along the side of the hill and beat towards us. I fancy that the jungle was so thick that they did not care to go into the middle of it. At any rate, after waiting nearly two hours with a very hot sun on our heads, nothing appeared on the slope except a few quail. A hot walk home made a bath of cold water more delicious than usual, and a good breakfast took away all signs of fatigue.

The next morning I started for my present encamping ground in the jungle, and found my tent pitched and breakfast ready. The place is a very pretty one, being a clear space of ground surrounded by an amphitheatre of hills, the grey rocks of which are relieved by a green fringe of jungle vegetation; to an

artist most picturesque, but to a sportsman there is rather too much of it. The jungle, and what is more to my purpose, the villages about belong to a certain Nabob, who lives near here. I soon found that nothing could be done in the way of getting beaters, except with his assistance, so I have despatched a letter in the Persian characters—my own production (and as you know I have not passed the P. I. yet, you may imagine the grammar was not perfect)—politely requesting his aid, the answer to which I am now awaiting. I find my tent rather close in the daytime, and so have betaken myself with my dogs to the shade of a fine pussal tree on the edge of my encamping ground. My servants are making bullets, my dogs asleep (“Rover” appears to be dreaming of some very exciting adventure, to judge from the convulsive manner in which he is kicking out his legs), and I am going to leave off this to read a bit of my constant companion on these lonely expeditions, viz. masterly old Shakespeare.

October 9.—The effect of my polite note to the Baboo was to bring him in *propria personâ*, guns, baggage and string of attendants, without whom no native pretending to be at all a great man ever leaves home. I met him yesterday evening as I was out with the dogs in the thinner part of the jungle having a look for a partridge or quail for my larder. I should mention that that very important part of a shooting expedition was in a very precarious state when I left off my journal yesterday. One wretched-looking chicken procured with great trouble in a village outside the jungle is all that there is to keep

a hungry hunter for a week. Now just as I was starting in the cool of the evening to see what I could do to replenish it, I was, as you may imagine, agreeably surprised by a shikari (hunter) coming up to my tent and asking in Hindustani idiom if it would please the "Sirkar" (the word literally means "the Government," but is often used when addressing European individuals) to come and shoot a peacock. As you may fancy (having let you into the secret of the state of the Sirkar's commissariat department) the Sirkar was delighted at the suggestion, and bustled out of his tent, and within one hundred yards in a small patch of some sort of grain we put up, sure enough, a hen peacock with a whole brood of young ones nearly half grown. I can assure you I did not feel the least compunction in knocking over the old mother and handing her over to the tender mercies of my khidmutgar (cook) and (here is an instance of the unnatural cruelty of sportsmen if you like) I must own to looking forward with unqualified satisfaction to bagging one of the chickens to-morrow, if they should be weak enough to come back to pay any filial respects to their highly respected maternal relative. You see the effects of three days' absence from respectable society combined with a possible prospect of a vacuum in my own interior economy about dinner-time, on a naturally mild disposition! For the last quarter of an hour I have been sitting outside my tent writing in haste, and disputing almost every line that I have written with a perfect legion of winged insectivora of all shapes, colours, and, worst of all, smells.

I have been at length fairly beaten from the field, have had to get up and shake myself, and have now taken my table, etc., inside my tent.

I consider my tent a perfect failure at present. It is just large enough to hold myself and property and dogs, who are, however, only allowed in as visitors at night time, as I am afraid of a leopard or hyena taking a fancy to one of them if tied outside. My tent is this sort of abode. On one side is my bed, opposite my camp stool and table. My gun cases and my personal luggage, viz. a small bag of clean shirts and stockings (very little more) are arranged round the side, and my guns and hog spears, ready for any intrusive midnight visitors, are propped against a cross piece of wood fastened to the pole of the tent near the head of my bed. My dogs, Rover, Flora, and their only surviving child "Di," are tied to a tent peg in the centre of the tent. They are at present asleep and looking pretty and cosy. The only thing wanting to complete the sporting appearance of the *tout ensemble* are a few deer skins. The Baboo, my sporting companion, is a good-looking man of about thirty-five, I should say. He is gentlemanly and obliging, not having yet been spoilt by mixing too much with Europeans. As far as I have seen of natives, high and low, they are essentially a far more *gentlemanly* race (if you know what I mean) than ourselves. There is more innate good breeding in them from peer to peasant. The higher classes would shame many of our own best born aristocracy in polish and natural ease of deportment. A native of any rank in



any situation will, as a general rule, always appear at his ease. And it seems to me that the point in which we, the male part of Old England, old and young, might well take a lesson from our coloured brethren of the East (for I have no doubt as to our origin being one, viz. "Germanic") is in this. That in any society one should be perfectly at one's ease, without appearing either conceited or too oblivious of others. The lowest classes of East Indians, when brought together as strangers anywhere, always introduce themselves with a salaam, the two peculiar puts on their foreheads being equivalent to the taking off our hats. Count on your fingers how many men of your acquaintance you can name having natural good manners in society, and how many (of whom you can have no doubt as to their sterling worth) appear to bring their manners into the drawing-room with their visiting cards or kid gloves, as the case may be. I am not quite sure whether I have explained myself, but I have strayed from my subject and must leave off writing shortly and go to bed, as I have rather a hard day's shooting before me. I don't think that I have told you yet that we, the Baboo and I, started this morning, soon after sunrise, with a troop of natives impressed from all round to beat the jungle. It is very exciting work, but as to-day we did not bag anything, I will put off the description of a "honk," as it is called, till to-morrow, when I may perhaps have some better results to tell, and so good-night.

*October 10.*—I have been out all day from about 7 a.m. in the morning till nearly sunset, but cannot

boast of having been very successful. However, I remember what old Horace wrote (whether he acted on it himself I should have great doubts): "*Equamemento rebus in arduis servare mentem.*" And I don't think that I am too easily cast down by what is called bad luck. But to describe as well as I can what I have been doing for the last two days. A "honk" simply means a "drive" or "driving." The jungle in these hills is far too thick to stalk anything, especially at this time of year, and "honking" is the only chance of getting a shot at any game. The openings in the hills (they are not more than from 400 to 600 feet high) form numerous valleys lined with very thick jungle, in which are the lairs of tiger, bears, and deer of all kinds. The head of these valleys and the sides, for the greater part of the way, are walled in by steep perpendicular rocks. The sportsmen are situated at the entrance of the valleys at likely spots for game to break, by natives who know the jungle, and the beaters troop along in single file to the head of the valley where they form a line fronting towards where the guns are placed. The depth of the valley may vary from quarter to half a mile to one and a half or two miles even. Sufficient time having been given for all to be in their places, the "honk" commences. The beaters advance in line, some screeching and shouting as only niggers can, others beating a very discordant species of drum called a tom-tom, and all doing their best to make it uncomfortable to any creature with or without an ear for music to remain within sound.

I know what my feelings would be if I were a ferocious tiger or timid deer awakened from my after-breakfast nap by such a pandemonium of noises. I should just put my tail between my legs and run as hard as I could without caring for guns, or sportsmen, or anything. But they are too sharp for that. They come along at a steady pace with their noses up, sniffing the air till they get a whiff, perhaps, from the spot where some ambitious young English sportsman had just finished his post-prandial cheroot (without which he will probably tell you he never can shoot), or else their eye will perhaps be caught by the glitter of some rich old Indian watch-chain, which they naturally consider a suspicious addition to the natural ornaments of the jungle, and then, having once made up their mind as to which side to take, it must be a very thick jungle and a very steep hill to stop them. I must tell you that for some little time I had given up smoking, finding it relaxing in the hot weather, so that the first picture cannot be applied to me.

There is a very old hunter out with me, about sixty years old, who has killed many a tiger in his time with his own native matchlock, and I always make him put me in a good place on these occasions. The first day I was out he ordered me to take off my coat; it being of a light colour and happening to be a clean one, would, as he justly remarked, attract the attention of the inhabitants of the jungle, they being accustomed to the dirty white clothes of the natives, but not to anything that may appear to have been in the washerman's hands at all lately. I felt the

force of his objection, and took it off without a murmur. My tyrant then showed me my station, and, having cut down with his axe (which these men always carry hooked over their shoulders) any branches in the immediate way of my gun, crouched himself down by my side and proceeded to prepare for action himself. His matchlock was, I suppose, already loaded (the barrels of matchlocks are about six feet long, and are said to be able to throw a bullet 1000 yards!), so that the only thing he had to do was to prepare the means of firing it off. With this in view he produces a steel and flint, lights a small bit of tow, with which he lights a slow match of native or perhaps personal make. I have not yet seen him fire it off, but when he wishes to do so he puts the slow match into a pair of pincers made to receive it in much the same position as the cock of a gun, and this is caused to descend on the flash-pan by a trigger placed underneath.

We had three "honks" yesterday and two to-day. Yesterday we moved several sambar, a huge kind of deer standing as much as fifteen hands high. One rushed past me not twenty yards off, but the jungle was so thick that I could not see him. The noise he made was something enormous. It was worth going out to hear alone.

*October 11.*—I have been obliged to give up the thick jungle and the chance of large deer. The poor Baboo has been quite walked off his legs, and was driven to ride his pony yesterday and to-day, whenever he could get a rideable path. Even the old shikari, in the face of large promises of backsheesh if

he should get me a shot at a sambar or a tiger, says that it is no use trying any more at this time of year; so here I am, at a village just outside the jungle. It is certainly more pleasant here; I feel less of a savage already than I did yesterday, which might perhaps be unphysiologically accounted for by the fact that I have had cow's milk in my tea instead of half-wild buffalo's.

We had another "honk" this morning, and, as bad luck would have it, after we had all left our stations a sambar was roused, which passed close to the place that I was at hardly a minute before. I was obliged to impress the bullocks of an old Hindoo going through the jungle, to take my tent, etc., to their new destination. He was inclined to consider himself a martyr at first, and, like all his brethren when in difficulties, said that he should die outright. He came to me at last, and I ordered some flour to be given him, and he then became reconciled to his fate. I walked with the dogs to our new halting-ground, Onnerempore, in the evening, and, coming across a nullah with rather a deeper water than usual, stripped and had a swim. On arrival I put the dogs into some fields of "dal," and put up several quail, but bagged none, partly from bad shooting and partly from the "dal" being so thick that it was very hard to find a bird so much the colour of grass, even when knocked over.

The Baboo comes up in the evening and tells me that near his own village he will give me plenty of bear and wild pig shooting. He proposes that he should go on this evening, make preparations for the

honk, and that I should come on the next morning. I agree, partly caught by the brilliant prospect of sport (I have only two days more clear for shooting), and partly out of curiosity to see the Baboo's village.

October 12.—After another swim in the nullah I make rather a light breakfast and start for the Baboo's village, called Krindle, on a pony kindly sent for me from the indigo factory. There is a strong family likeness in all these villages of petty Rajahs and Baboos, more especially perhaps in the following few points. They are generally built on a gradually rising ground, the great man's citadel being situated on the highest point, giving a slight resemblance of fortifications to the whole. There is a very strong family likeness of what I should call a systematic growth of dirt, the result of a still more common family likeness of extreme indolence. No one appears to do anything for himself or anybody else; there are no dealers in grain even (as a general rule, in India, where there are even one or two houses together there is always a shop to sell grain); it is a perfect pig-stye (not garden) of idleness. The third point of family resemblance that I may mention is a melancholy three-quarter starved elephant, for what purpose entertained I'm sure I don't know, unless it is for the same reason that *les grandes maisons* keep footmen with immense calves.

On my arrival I was received by a servant waiting for me, and ushered up a broken ladder to an open upper room over some stables. The room was naturally a pleasant one, with a pretty view of the hills, but the demon of untidiness had placed his

sceptre here also. I asked for some water, and they brought some very good water, and spoilt it by putting some dirty brown sugar into it and calling it sherbet. I had arranged that the honk was to begin on my arrival, so I very soon sent my salaam to the Baboo, who was in his citadel aforesaid, and informed him that I was quite ready if he was. I received back some civil answer and request that I would take a little rest after my ride, as the men for the honk had not arrived. I was obliged to accept his polite suggestion. But after about an hour's rest my English subalternship's impatience, urged on by the remembrance that I had only two more shooting days left, began to fret against the Baboo and his dilatoriness and indeed faithlessness, for it was clear that he had made no effort to get the men ready as he had promised to do. So some two or three hours after my arrival I sent down to say that I could wait no longer, and that I should start with the number of men that I could get. This brought a servant out to show me the way, and away we went, the Baboo himself catching us up on his pony before we had gone more than a quarter of a mile. The Baboo then showed to better advantage than he had done hitherto, and stuck to his shooting like a sportsman and an inhabitant of our own wet little bit of country. Two pigs were started and were shot at, and owing to our starting so late I was benighted on the hill and had to make my way down a dry water-course under the guidance of another Baboo, a friend of the one whom you know. He was an old man, and it was amusing to notice the care he thought proper to take of my foot-

steps, thus delaying us both considerably, and as I was beginning to feel hungry, not having eaten anything except a chupattie (a sort of doughy half-baked bread) since my light breakfast in the morning, I was obliged to tell the old gentleman pretty plainly that he had better look after himself, I being pretty able under the present circumstances to look after myself. I arrived here some time after dark, not over pleased with my friend the Baboo, and found my tent pitched as I had directed just outside the village. I am afraid I must make up my mind to give up the idea of bagging any large game this trip. I have just heard, however, that a tiger has killed a cow at a village not far from this, and have ordered one of my men to go off the first thing in the morning to find out if it is true ; and so good-night.



## CHAPTER V

### REGIMENTAL LIFE IN INDIA

THE year 1862 found the regiment at Allahabad, where, as ill luck would have it, we were fated to renew acquaintance with that dreaded scourge of the East, Asiatic cholera. The regiment was at once ordered into camp, and all the usual precautions against the spread of infection were rigorously enforced ; but in spite of all we lost many men, though no officer was attacked.

A single instance will give an idea of the extent to which the epidemic had subverted all the ordinary social conventionalities.

A married man had been attacked by the disease, and had died. His wife attended his burial, and on leaving the cemetery was proposed to by a man of the regiment, to whom she had to reply that she was engaged !

The slight acquaintance that I had already made with the Hindustanee language, little as it was, helped much to overcome the barrier that divides the two races, the dark and the fair, and I found that a few soft words in a man's native tongue could be more effective than much strong invective in an alien language, and so I continued to persevere in my studies of the Eastern classics.

I suppose that most of those who have travelled much abroad can call to mind how lasting friendships have developed from slight acquaintanceship under the kindly influence of a mutual knowledge of a language. Two instances in my own personal experience of a rather unusual character occur to my mind.

In the year 1900 my wife and I and two of our children spent a summer in Brussels, where we made the acquaintance of a lady of French extraction, a Mdme. Darcemont, who gave the children some help in their French. The acquaintanceship ripened into a friendship that has been continued to the present day, for every Christmas and Easter we receive some pretty little remembrance from our friend in Brussels.

Another instance will show that a difference in race and creed need in no way affect a true bond of friendship.

In the year 1886 I held the command of the Kamptee Brigade in the Nagpore district of Central India, and my kotwal or bazaar master, by name Sheikh Muhamad Abd-ul-Ghaffur (the Servant of the Merciful One), was a fine old grey-bearded Mohammedan, who may have fought against us in his early days, but was now a loyal servant of the Crown, and very devoted to myself and my family.

On my leaving Kamptee on transfer to the Secunderabad command, we lost sight of our old friend, but what was our surprise some years later, when finally leaving India, to find, on our arrival at Bombay to embark for home, our old veteran awaiting us,

having come down from up country expressly to see us off. And this is not all, for I received from time to time letters from him for many years, indeed until the time of his death, in which he seldom failed to ask expressly after "Missy Baba," our little daughter of those days, who had grown into a young personage approaching six feet in stature.

But even this is not all, for Abd-ul-Ghaffur's son continued to correspond with us until his early death, and now I have before me a letter in Persian from his son, the grandson of our old friend, promising to send us a photograph of his little daughter. This constitutes a constancy of friendship between aliens in race, not, I think, easily equalled.

But to return to the East. Apart from the depressing influence of the cholera epidemic, I found much of interest in the place and the people.

I kept a sort of diary in those days, which I have still by me, and from which some extracts may perhaps serve to express the impressions of a young soldier on his first visit to the East.

"In August, 1864, I was returning from Calcutta, where I had been to pass an examination in Persian. The distance to Allahabad by the railway is  $630\frac{1}{2}$  miles, and the time thirty hours, including ample time for refreshments which, such as they are, are procurable every three or four hours. The fares are very moderate, 1st class 60 rupees, 2nd class 30 rupees, 3rd class 10 rupees. The pace about twenty-three miles an hour.

"The country, as far as Rajmahal, is entirely flat, and produces rice, sugar-cane, and Indian corn in

never varying monotony, the expanse being only broken by clumps of trees in Lower Bengal, principally cocoa nuts and other palms. At Rajmahal the scenery greatly improves. On one side you have the Ganges, at this time of year a gigantic flood, dotted with crowds of single-masted, square-rigged boats, on the other a tolerably high range of hills, most refreshing to the eye after the late interminable flats. Their tops are often cultivated, but in general appearance they seem to be covered with the same luxuriant mass of jungle through which the railway takes its solitary path.

"Tigers are occasionally seen, and at this very time I heard that one of the roads near the railway was stopped by them.

"Soon after leaving Dinapore the Soane bridge is reached, one of the greatest triumphs of engineering skill of the present century. It is a few feet under a mile in length, is built entirely of iron, and rests on twenty-six stone pillars sunk deeply below the dead level of the river, on account of the shifting of the sands during the rains. The pillars are shaped like the cut-water of a ship, as the rush of water at the commencement of the rains is tremendous.

"The roadway is a sort of open tunnel under the railway.

"The only noticeable object after this is the fort of Chunar, of which there is an excellent view from the railway. It is a curious, naturally scarped hill overhanging the Ganges, and from its natural features must have been an awkward place to take without guns. It would now be simply a trap for an enemy

provided with modern artillery to pitch his shells into.

"The bridge across the Jumna not being finished (it will take about two years more) we crossed in a steam ferry. This is a great inconvenience, as during the heavy rains the current is so strong as to make the crossing occupy several hours.

"On crossing I was glad to find Weigall and Browne waiting to welcome me back, and after a visit to the fort to say 'How d'ye do?' to our detachment there, I came up to head-quarters and was installed in the same rooms that I had left fifteen months before.

"About September 10 cholera again made its appearance; having left us in peace so far this year, I suppose that it felt bound to remind us of its existence.

"Not that our regiment is likely ever to forget it, as since we landed in India in June, 1858, we have lost at least 200 men by that fateful disease.

"The cases that now occurred were very rapidly fatal; a matter of a few hours being the only difference between a strong man in apparent good health, and the same man not only dead, but in many cases, from some peculiarity in the disease, shrivelled up into an unrecognizable skeleton. We lost six or seven men in as many days, among them our band-master, Perry, a great loss in every way, but especially as being an excellent musician. He was one of so many others who owed their death to allowing themselves to become dispirited and nervous, and who adopted the surest way of getting

the disease they wished so much to avoid by taking to drink.

“Our total loss in dead and invalided men in our so far six years’ service in India now amounted to about 600 men.”

The diary continues :—“This morning (September 27) I started at 5.30 a.m. and rode down to the camp. The mornings are very fresh and pleasant, but about 7 o’clock it gets very hot in the sun. The doctors fixed quarter to seven a.m. as the best time for the men to bathe, and accordingly at that hour the regiment was marched down to the banks of the Ganges, some 300 yards from the barracks. The water is thick and turbid, and the banks muddy.

“A man named Walters, of No. 8 Company, went into the water with several others, rather incautiously as he could not swim, and suddenly sank and disappeared.

“Several of the best swimmers dived for him several times, but without any success in finding him, neither did the body come to the surface again. The supposition is that he fell into a hole. He was a very weakly man. It was curious to note how little concern the men show on such an occasion. Death has, indeed, become so familiar to them that it has lost its terror except when they themselves are attacked. Though I was not more than fifty yards from the spot and saw a few men gathered together, yet for some time I had no idea that there had been an accident.

“At the bugle sound the men left the water, dressed, fell in, and were marched back to camp, two

or three of the best swimmers remaining to see if they could find the body.

"The bank must have been full of pitfalls as occasionally quite close to the shore the men could not find bottom. The body was found the next day by the natives by thrusting a long bamboo into the mud at the bottom of the river and going down hand over hand, and so trying all about the spot. When recovered it was found to be partially eaten by turtles.

"The following record of temperature is given—

Thermometer, September, 1864.

In sun . . Average of 8 days . . 106 $\frac{5}{8}$ ° Fahr.

„ . . Greatest heat (27th) . . 114°

Indoors . . Average of 12 days . . 88 $\frac{2}{3}$ °

„ . . Greatest heat (23rd) . . 91°

(Not observed on 27th).

"October 4, 1864.—Dale, C.S., asked me to go this morning at 7 o'clock to his compound to see some native wrestling. Accordingly I went there after my morning's walk and found a dense crowd of natives surrounding a space some 30 feet square over which was pitched a "shamiana" (tent cover).

"The generally deferential and respectful natives crowded round the great Civilian Commissioner Magistrate, and could hardly be kept back by a number of police, whose truncheons often received assistance from our canes, though not so as to hurt any one.

"A rich baboo, a contractor, had offered the sum of 100 rupees to the successful competitor.

"There were two entries for this prize. One a

strongly built, hard-looking young fellow with a particularly ugly face as I thought, his front teeth projecting almost at right angles to his face. The other a sensual looking fat fellow, but with good muscular development.

"They commenced by smacking loudly their arms and thighs with their hands and by rubbing a little earth on their foreheads (some religious idea, I fancy), and then they grappled with each other. The ground is picked up so as to be soft, and they almost immediately fall when the real work begins. At times they wreathe and twist themselves like serpents, at others one will go on all fours and defy his opponent to move him. The fat wrestler was in this position when he thought he saw a chance, and in fact by a sudden twist of his body he nearly succeeded in throwing his adversary, who very actively evaded the fall and put our fat friend on his back amidst the plaudits of the crowd, who immediately rushed into the ring, and patted the conqueror on his back.

"Two other pairs followed. In one case in which a small man was pitted against a large fatter fellow, the former got into the position of all fours described above, and the big fellow failing to move him they drew the match, though I believe that the little fellow was game to go on.

"*October* 16.—The cool weather seems to be deferred, as the thermometer still shows from 110° to 120° in the sun and 87° indoors, and the nights are decidedly close.

"The very early mornings are, however, delicious: one feels so delightfully well and fit for work; a



feeling, however, that rapidly diminishes after the appearance of the sun, and about noon nothing can resist the desire for at any rate an hour's snooze.

"I crossed the stream of the Ganges near the barracks, where it divides and forms an island, early one morning with my gun in the hopes of finding some wild duck; and though I only got some long shots, and bagged nothing, yet I thoroughly enjoyed the stroll.

"There is something peculiarly refreshing in the morning air in a tropical climate after a hot and close night, and this added to the feeling of something like romance that an Englishman can hardly fail to experience, though he would, perhaps, hesitate to allow it himself, at his remarkable position as a representative, however humble a one, of the nation, lord and master of so vast a country; all this makes a solitary morning stroll in India interesting.

"I put up three quail in the brushwood on the other side of the river, but at the instant not being able to remember in which barrel was the shot and in which the bullet (for I expected to meet some pig) I did not fire, and could not find them again.

"The dew on the bushes was exactly as if a heavy rain had fallen."

Here the diary ends.

Note by H. M. Bengough, fifty years after—

"It is presumed, or at least hoped, that I knew there was no Tent Club in the district, as the wild boar is as much protected by sportsmen in India as the fox in England, and to shoot a "pig" in a Tent

Club district would be reckoned as great a crime as to trap a fox in Leicestershire."

*November*, 1864, saw the regiment happily settled at Bareilly, a favourite station in the N.W. Provinces, and the change was greatly appreciated by all ranks after the sombre experiences of Allahabad.

We very soon started our cricket club, which had been allowed to languish sadly during our late cholera campaign, and later polo, and even jackal hunting, with a scratch pack of foxhounds, and gymkhana races were duly introduced. But the point that more particularly interested me was the unexpected opportunities that were offered for "shikar" on a scale almost beyond my most high-flown dreams.

I had already had, as I have above attempted to describe, some little experience in jungle sport, although hitherto without attaining the object of my ambition, a tiger skin; but now the opportunity was suddenly offered me of joining in what may be called the "royal" way of tiger shooting. This, I knew, could only be experienced when exceptional means are available, such as elephants "broken to tiger," and provided with howdahs for the guns, and accompanied by a large number of beaters and such-like regal paraphernalia, all this being outside the resources of an infantry subaltern.

At Bareilly, however, I was fortunate in finding a good friend and keen sportsman in Colonel Arthur Dickens, in charge of the Commissariat Department of the District Command.

At that time elephants formed an important part of Indian commissariat transport, and the Bareilly

district was fortunate in possessing an exceptionally fine stock of those noble creatures. Five or six of those most suitable were selected to take part in a shikar expedition, which I was happily invited to join.

All the arrangements were carried out on the most comfortable, I might write luxurious, lines. Tents were sent out to a suitable spot, previously cleared in the jungle. Our host was himself somewhat of a *bon viveur*, and the kitchen department suffered but little from being outside the ordinary area of civilization, for indeed the Indian *chef* is at his best when worst supplied with Western equipment. An excellent dinner served in our mess tent and a comfortable bed in a small but cosy little sleeping tent, made us ready to turn out at early dawn on the appearance of the Madrassee "boy" bearing a steaming cup of coffee or tea. Our party, when I joined it, consisted of our host and a young Bengal civilian, Middleton Rogers by name, a keen sportsman and excellent rifle shot. The latter was at the time reading for a service examination, and was generally to be seen in his howdah with a copy of the Indian Civil Service Code in one hand and his rifle in the other. Let me offer a brief description of a shikar "howdah" for the uninitiated. It is simply a chair made to fit on an elephant's back, provided with a rest in front, and a box to hold rifle ammunition, or a book, or papers, etc. An attendant or gun bearer sits on a seat behind, and the *mahout*, or driver, sits on the elephant's neck, with his legs dangling behind the creature's big ears, and holding the *ankus* or

driving iron for guiding the elephant in his hand. This instrument is seldom required to be used, these intelligent animals being, as a rule, readily directed by the mahout's legs as he sits astride its neck. There are occasions, however, when an elephant, from fear or out of mischief, will, so to speak, take the bit in its mouth, and if this should happen in a dense forest, a bad accident is likely to be the result. As a rule, however, these sensitive creatures seem to be aware of the little house on their backs, and will manœuvre their way through a dense jungle with their burden, avoiding hanging branches of trees, or breaking intercepting boughs with their long and sensitive trunks.

The scene of our first "honk" or beat was a strip of jungle flanked by a river, and consisting mainly of strong and high jungle grass, so high that, standing on the ground by the side of my colossal mount in a sea of grass high above my head, I felt strangely dwarfed.

It was on this spot, a few days before my journey to camp, that a rather comic scene was enacted, that might easily have ended tragically. A wounded tiger had sprung on the head of the elephant on which Col. Vezey, V.C., of 46th Regiment, was mounted, and the elephant, in shaking off the tiger, dislodged the gallant colonel from his howdah, and he found himself on the ground *vis-à-vis* to an angry tiger. The colonel was small of stature, but somewhat stern of countenance, and with his large white *solah-topie* must have presented a rather formidable appearance, at any rate the tiger declined a further

encounter, and slunk away in the long grass. The rifle that the colonel held in his hand was a breech-loader, and in his fall the breech action had become jammed; and this was probably fortunate, for a shot at such close quarters, had it not proved actually mortal, would have in all probability enraged the tiger and induced it to charge.

The first duty before commencing the "honk" was to place "stops" on the flanks of the strip of jungle in which the tiger was believed to be. This duty was performed by natives instructed to tap the trees with a stick from time to time, which is generally sufficient to prevent a tiger from breaking away. This done, the drive commenced, the elephants advancing slowly in line and the riders ready with rifle in hand. For a time there was no sign of the tiger, but after a bit some of the elephants showed symptoms of uneasiness, stopping and sounding notes of alarm, especially those which were not "broken to tiger." My mount was a staunch shikar elephant, and on more than one occasion it was called on to come to the encouragement of a more timid brother, which was effected by applying some formidable whacks with its trunk to the hinder quarters of its nervous comrade.

We were nearing the end of our beat, and the grass was less thick and high, and it seemed to me impossible that so large an animal as a tiger could be hidden from view, when I noticed a movement of the grass right in front of me, and in another moment a fine tiger sprang into sight and charged straight for my elephant. I fired a shot and it turned and bounded down the whole of our line receiving a small

fusillade, but undaunted it pursued its course and plunged into the river; then having swum some distance out under a scattered fire, it turned back in the face of a warm hostile reception, clambered up the bank and boldly charged the line of elephants again, until a shot from Middleton Roger's rifle laid it low, still fronting the foe.

The skin was, in accord with the rules of *shikar*—somewhat generously, I think, construed for a novice—given to me, as my first bullet was said to have taken effect. It is still in my possession, and I can even now clearly recall the whole exciting scene. The moments of expectation, then the sudden appearance of the big, angry cat, its gallant dash for life down the line of its enemies, its bold plunge into the river, its return, still under fire, and its last, fierce charge, meeting its death at the feet of one of its great comrades of the jungle, now enlisted, for the time being, on the side of its natural enemy, man.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE AGRA DURBAR

It was about this time that I made an effort to interest the non-commissioned officers and men of my company in a soldier's career by reading to them accounts of battles and other military incidents.

I remember that I commenced with the account of Napoleon's retreat from Moscow and the passage of the Beresina, and was gratified and indeed rather surprised at the way in which they responded to the recital of such military achievements.

I should record here at this time the regiment possessed two officers, both of whom in his own line exercised a considerable influence for good. They were H. M. Colquhoun and Wm. Wordsworth.

Colquhoun was an enthusiast in rifle shooting and in total abstinence. Wordsworth, a grandson of the poet, was a man of strong religious convictions, and interested himself greatly to the advantage of the regiment in organising a reading-room for the men and in holding prayer meetings.

He did not remain long in the service, but took Holy Orders, and became his father's curate at Brigham, Cumberland, in which county he has since held various livings. While in the regiment he was a consistent total abstainer.

My own personal view of the total abstinence question for what it is worth was, and is, that a man who can drink wine and spirits without excess is in a somewhat higher moral grade than one who abjures all alcoholic beverages from fear of exceeding.

I learnt in very early days the evil consequence of excess, as the following little incident will show. It was my father's annual custom to hold an audit dinner for the tenants, at which my eldest brother John usually presided. On one occasion I, as a Rugby school boy, accompanied him on my velocipede to the village where the feast was held, being some six or seven miles from The Ridge, my home.

After the usual after-dinner toasts the usual hot whisky punch and pipes and tobacco were introduced, of which I, not too wisely perhaps, partook, but started on my return journey before the party broke up.

Of that journey homewards I have but a dim recollection, but I do remember the feeling of shame and sickness on awaking at early dawn to find myself lying under the hedge at the side of the road, the velocipede by my side. Whisky punch ceased to have any attractions for me from that night.

I am inclined to believe that Colquhoun's enthusiasm for teetotalism had a somewhat similar origin. The success that attended his reformatory efforts was remarkable. In the year 1870 and after there were from 100 to 200 total abstainers in the regiment, and crime was proportionately reduced. But Colquhoun's enthusiasm for regimental reform was not confined to



the canteen: it was almost as notably displayed on the rifle range.

He was one of the first to recognize that the soldier's weapon was no longer to be the bayonet, but the bullet. He was an ardent disciple of the School of Musketry at Hythe, and imparted much of his enthusiasm for rifle shooting into the regiment, with the result that one year the 77th Regiment attained the proud position of the best shooting regiment in the Army in India.

Major Colquhoun was shortly made District Inspector of Musketry in the Oude Command, and such was his devotion to the duties of his post that he would not hesitate to make a sudden and unexpected visit to the regimental rifle range to ensure that the letter of the Red Book of Musketry Regulations was duly observed. He may be said, indeed, to have possessed all the virtues and but few of the incidental vices of an enthusiast.

There were two other young officers in the regiment at this time who perhaps deserve mention, though of a different type: the one my brother subaltern in the grenadier company, who was 21 years old and weighed 21 stone. He was, as are, I think, big men generally, of a very good-tempered disposition, and in spite of his weight a keen cricketer. It was astonishing the ground he would cover fielding point.

On his first joining it was amusing to see the men running out of their barrack-room to peep at him as he walked down the lines.

The other was an unfortunate young fellow of

native extraction, in fact a half-caste, who had unwisely received a commission, and who naturally felt himself misplaced in a British regiment, both among officers and men ; with the former he felt himself out of touch socially, and with the men he was inclined to preface a command, for instance to pitch a tent, with the prefix, more polite than military, "please." He was a quiet and well-intentioned young fellow, and liked by us all, and I should not have introduced any mention of him here, but that his kindly reception in the regiment redounds so much, I think, to the credit of all concerned. He did not remain long in the service.

During our stay at Bareilly we started a very scratch pack of foxhounds to hunt the wily jackal, without having much sport, though it was an excuse for a gallop and pleasant to hear the sound of the horn again. We had also cricket, pony polo, and sky races. In the latter I recollect weighing in before a race with a good margin in hand, and when weighing out, on coming in "first" being disqualified for not scaling the weight. The weather was hot.

Our next move was to Peshawur—a welcome change, as there always seemed a chance of something turning up in the way of service in the field on the Afghan frontier. We were by now well trained to tramping the Grand Trunk Road, and starting at daybreak could do our four miles in the hour comfortably, the men being in marching order and carrying the usual complement of ball ammunition.

I had continued my studies in the Eastern languages with some success, and had passed the

examination for Military Interpreter in 1862, and for High Proficiency in Persian in 1866, and was much gratified by receiving an invitation to attend the Durbar at Agra in that year as Persian Interpreter and extra Aide-de-Camp to the Governor-General (Lord Mayo).

The regiment also attended the Durbar as part of the Vice-Regal escort. This was a most interesting event for all concerned, but especially so perhaps for myself, as it gave me the opportunity of getting in touch with the Afghan magnates whose native language is Persian.

But at the same time it brought home to me, what later experience has confirmed, that the book knowledge of a language is of itself of little practical use without colloquial practice. All who have travelled much abroad will acknowledge, I think, how much easier it is to ask for what one wants than to understand what a foreigner desires to say.

Having passed the "High Proficiency" test in Persian, I was supposed to be capable of acting as Interpreter in that language; but I remember being called on by the Governor-General on one occasion to attend at an interview that had been arranged with one of the Afghan independent chiefs. It was, fortunately for me, an interview of ceremony, and the Persian language is admirably suited for saying much and meaning little, and so I escaped without disgrace; but I felt that had it been a matter of debatable diplomacy I should have been sadly puzzled to convert the elaborate Persian subtleties into plain English.

The Durbar was itself a very interesting function—a combination of military and Oriental glitter and grandeur, carried out with the ceremonial completeness only possible in the East.

I was much impressed throughout the short time that I had the honour of serving on Lord Mayo's staff at this time, and later as an extra aide-de-camp, with the particular fitness, if I may be allowed so to express it, of his Excellency for the high and difficult office of Governor-General of India.

There was a natural *bonhomie* in his character that appealed to all who came in contact with him, either on public business or in social life. His acquaintance with and his love for country pursuits was a great help in the many problems of land and agriculture that have so important a place in Indian government, and his tact and sound judgment were proverbial.

If it may be allowed for a soldier to offer a comparison between the system of work as exemplified by two such able Governors as Lord Lawrence and Lord Mayo, I would suggest that Lord Lawrence was inclined to do not only his own work but a goodly share of that of those under him, whereas Lord Mayo contented himself by ensuring that every one did his own work thoroughly.

The manner of Lord Mayo's death was indeed tragic; it was so contrary to all apparent possibilities, that he who had identified himself so closely with the people of all classes, should fall by the hand of a common assassin, having no political or personal motive, but only greedy to avenge himself on the

hand of justice by taking the life of some great officer of the State ! (a burra Sahib).

It is remarkable that Lord Mayo always rather demurred to any special measures being taken for his safety in public. His brother and military secretary, Major Edward Bourke, used to take certain necessary precautions for the Viceroy when appearing on such occasions ; but these were deprecated by Lord Mayo, who would say, "It is no use, Eddie, taking this trouble about me. They will do for me some day if they wish to."

Lord Mayo has left a title in India as a Governor-General that has seldom been equalled, and can never, it may safely be said, be surpassed.

On rejoining the regiment at Peshawur I found much to interest me. The people of the north of India, especially those with Afghan blood in their veins, are very different to the ordinary native of Hindostan. They are a bold but somewhat turbulent race, and indeed the native town is not altogether safe for Europeans to visit. The people are audacious thieves, as we found, indeed I fear I must say, to our disgrace, for one night a stand of arms was stolen from one of our regimental guards, almost under the eyes of the sentry on the post.

There was a story of an officer of a regiment in former days, who had boasted that none of his property could be stolen, as when he went to sleep he always laid his sword on his bed. On his waking one morning he found the sword drawn and thrust between his legs through the bed !

It was during the stay of the regiment at Peshawur

my sporting chum, Randal Jackson, and I arranged for a trip into the Himalayas, with a view to a visit to Cashmere, and the possible prospect of bagging a bear or two, or an urial, or a bharal, or a markhor.

We made our start from Simla in very light marching order, taking little but our rifles and ammunition, and a small stock of rupees. There is little to record during the first part of our journey, whilst we were on the main road, so to speak, through the mountains.

We duly admired the scenery, with its apparently limitless vastness, dwarfing all that one had seen or imagined of grandeur in its snow-clad ranges. The pass by which we crossed the Karakoram range into Cashmere was 11,000 feet above the sea, some of the neighbouring passes being as much as 18,000 or 19,000 feet.

I have a very distinct recollection of that day's work. Though the temperature was, of course, cold, yet the sun was hot, and after crossing I found that the mountain staff that I carried in my hand to assist my steps was shrivelled and split as if it had been placed before a hot kitchen fire. Moreover, our whole camp, natives as well as ourselves, were snow-blind for a couple of days after crossing. But no ill effects were felt after that time.

We had seen nothing in the way of sport on our way, as indeed we had kept to the main route, but bears were reported to be in the neighbourhood, and indeed evidence of their existence was not wanting, as more than one of the villagers could show how a bear when angry will scalp a man's face, rising on its

hind feet and tearing down the forehead with its claws. This fact, I fear, puts out of court the time-honoured nursery stories of an angry bear hugging his opponent, if a man, in its arms.

On our arrival in far-famed Cashmere we looked expectantly, but in vain, for "the roses, the sweetest that earth ever gave," of which Tom Moore sings so pleasantly. There are indeed a few dog roses to be seen growing wild, but none with which the wild rose of our hedgerows at home cannot very favourably compete: but Moore was not only a poet but an Irishman, and on both grounds can claim, I suppose, a certain freedom of expression.

Srinagar itself, too, I am afraid, we wrote down as a failure. There is a pretty lake and a picturesque village, and the Maharajah very hospitably gave us quarters during our stay, and, I fear I must write, that is all.

On our return journey we loitered on the way in the hope of finding some sport, and I recollect passing a night lying on the snow in the hope of getting a shot at something at early dawn. I passed a very pleasant night, not experiencing any great cold, and enjoying the brilliant light of the stars, which, seen in those lofty regions and in the clear atmosphere, appear so much nearer the earth than we are accustomed to view them.

I am not a member of the Alpine Club, nor indeed do I know that I am qualified for such a distinction; but I have sometimes wondered how the mountaineering of the East and the West may be comparable. Though there are no glaciers to scale

in the Himalayas, and no crevasses to cross, there are some rather risky spots on the track, where the native on nature's soles skips lightly over, but where the more highly civilized creature, shod in a pair of ammunition boots, would gladly accept the end of a friendly rope. There is, too, the uncomfortable feeling that if a slip is made there is no hope of rescue. However, accidents of this kind are very rare.

On our return to Peshawur I resumed my Eastern literary studies, and made an excursion into the Turkish language, which, being based on the Arabic, did not present so many difficulties. I established quite a friendly relationship with the aged Mahomedan, my munshi, and it was through him that I became possessed of a copy of the Koran in the three languages, Arabic, Persian, and Hindustani. This was an exceptional privilege, as no devout Mussulman will sell or give a copy of their holy book to an infidel, unless with confidence that their sacred volume will be treated with respect at least, if not with the reverence that they themselves observe towards it.

I was fortunate in finding a copy of the "Arabian Nights," or more properly the "Thousand and One Nights," in the original tongue, and enjoyed the renewal of my boyhood acquaintances in their native dress, though the diction certainly requires a little chastening before presentation to a British public. This particular copy has left my bookshelf for the Bodleian Library, through a mistake when I was absent from England.



My reminiscences of our service at Peshawur are not many worth recording, and seem to centre round an unpleasant personal experience of being run away with in a tandem dog-cart. I was always fond of a bit of coaching, and on this occasion I had put a couple of horses in my cart without much training, and had got them to go pretty well together.

But one day, just as I started up a rather narrow lane by my house, something startled my wheeler, and he broke into a gallop, and the leader, taking the hint, followed suit. I did not anticipate any great difficulty in stopping them when I got them on the main road, but I soon found that, being fresh and excited, they were determined to have their gallop. It is not, as some of my readers may know from experience, a pleasant feeling to recognize that you have lost control of your team. The thought arises in your mind, how is this going to end? In this case it ended by the wheeler coming down and my finding myself on the road, a little dazed, but with no bones broken. Neither the horses nor the trap were much damaged.

The relation of this, in itself not very important incident, recalls to my memory two other occasions when I experienced the same unpleasant sensation of being powerless to control one's steed and how one begins vaguely wondering how the situation is to end.

On the first of these occasions I was a student at the Staff College, and had ridden up to the high ground behind the college to make a military sketch. I had dismounted and had taken some angles with my

prismatic compass, holding my horse by the reins thrown over its head.

On completing my sketch I proposed to return to the college, and returning my compass to its case I prepared to mount. As I put my foot into the stirrup, the horse, impatient to be off, started at a gallop. I managed to gain my seat in the saddle, but missed the off stirrup, and before I could gather up the reins the horse started for home at a fair gallop. I tried in vain to catch the off stirrup with my foot, and the horse, seeing its advantage, broke into a runaway gallop, and chose the road running down a steep incline to the Cadets' College.

Having no grip of the saddle I found myself quite unable to do more than keep my seat and resign myself to the imagination of how this was to end.

Indeed I can hardly tell now how it did end, but to the best of my recollection it ended by my running the horse into a dead wall in the college grounds. Neither of us was hurt, but I think that we were both glad that that mad gallop down a steep and stony hill had come to an end.

In the third experience of a runaway incident I was not alone. It was in India, at Bangalore, when on the General Staff, I had driven my wife and little daughter, eight years old, to the railway station in our carriage with a pair of ponies. We were returning from the station down a rather steep hill when an engine on the line behind us gave a shrill whistle. The ponies bolted at a gallop, and in trying to get hold of their heads I must have turned them

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towards the hedge, for we soon found the carriage capsized and ourselves in the road. The first thing I remember was our little daughter coming up to me, my hat in hand, and saying quite quietly, "Here is your hat, father! How are we going home?"

This daughter of ours developed into a great lover of horses. In her early years she would sit for hours in a chair with a whip and reins and another chair in front for the horses, and when only ten years old she maintained a personal acquaintance with all the omnibus horses at Hastings.

## CHAPTER VII

### HOME AGAIN

DURING the whole of my regimental service in India I occupied a good deal of my spare time in making a collection of the game birds to be found in the districts in which the regiment was from time to time stationed, and in jotting down what I could learn, from books or from natives, of their habits, etc. This, of course, entailed some practice in skinning and preserving the skins of birds without injury to their plumage, and I can well remember after toiling in a broiling heat for some hours after some little bird, it required no little enthusiasm, on return to a small tent, to sit down and spend another hour or so in the skinning and dressing of my specimen.

In one case I was particularly lucky, as I secured the only specimen of a woodcock that I ever saw in India.

It is in connection with this pursuit that I have an incident to record which I would gladly have ignored but for two reasons : the one, that as I have undertaken to write these my memoirs I feel that I must do so honestly, relating the darker scenes as well as the brighter, and the other reason, that I hope a lesson may be read in the painful mishap that I have to relate.

I may premise the brief, but sad, story by saying that I have always had a kindly feeling for all the dumb creation, but more especially for the horse and the dog. The horse, or rather perhaps I should say my horse, is my friend and companion in the stall as in the saddle, but my dog is my pal and my chum at all times.

As in most of my expeditions in search of natural history specimens I was unaccompanied, I thought it would be pleasant to have as companions in sport a brace of English spaniels, and accordingly I managed for a couple to be sent out to me to Bombay.

They arrived safely in a P. & O. steamer, and I went to meet them at Bombay, and learnt that they had been made much of on board the steamer as an enterprising young couple going out for a trip to the East. They were called "Rover and Flora." They were not quite broken to the gun, but were very keen, and proved very pleasant companions to me on my solitary strolls.

One unfortunate day the dogs put up a small covey of partridges of a kind of which I was anxious to get a specimen for my collection, and I knocked over a bird.

The dogs ran to the bird, and Rover commenced mouthing it. I was very wrathful, and ran up, and with my heavy shooting boots gave the dog a kick. He dropped the bird, fell over on his side and—died. I have never forgotten the feeling of shame and distress that overwhelmed me. I need not say that I have never kicked a dog since that unhappy day.

From Peshawur we moved down to Noshera, a short march. The cholera fiend had not spared us during our stay at the former station, and we left one hundred good men and our adjutant, Captain Cook, much regretted, in the cemetery there. Our adjutant was a man who very successfully combined the valuable but rare qualities of the *suaviter in modo cum fortiter in re*.

Noshera is, or was in those days, a dull little station; for, as a matter of fact, we were dependent solely on ourselves for society. Our nearest neighbours were the Guides, an excellent irregular native corps, then under the command of that fine soldier, Colonel Sam Browne, famous then and since as the inventor of the workmanlike sword-belt that still goes by his name. He was, besides his qualifications as an exemplary border soldier, a keen sportsman and an expert in falconry. The regiment of Guides that he commanded had several stands of hawks, and we enjoyed many a good gallop with them. It requires a certain amount of nerve to gallop over an unknown country abounding in *nullahs* (deep ditches), with your gaze turned skywards.

The falcon generally used was the *shahin* (*F. perigrinator*). I had one for a short time, but did not succeed in training it much for falconry.

In virtue of my acquaintance with the language I was appointed to the post of bazaar-master at Noshera; and I was glad to find that my kotwal, or chief constable, was a Persian, which gave me some useful practice in the colloquial use of that language.

My magisterial experience, too, slight as it was, gave me an insight into the difficulties in arriving at the truth of any statements made by natives in court. But there are certain ways, as I discovered, by which the very tendency to make false statements may be used to discover the truth, *e.g.* a native (A) brings a false charge of assault with a stick against another native (B), and calls (C) as a witness. When questioned as to the exact length and size of the stick, (A) will swear positively as to its dimensions, and when (C) gives his evidence and is similarly closely cross-questioned he will swear equally positively to the exact size, etc., of the stick, so that it will not be difficult to see that the charge is a fraud.

I have heard of several ingenious devices said to have been successfully practised to discover a thief or a dishonest servant. Natives of India are mostly very superstitious, and all the servants of a house being called together, to each one is given a bit of stick, all the pieces being of equal length, and the assembled servants are told that the bit of stick held by the thief will grow an inch during the night, and that the thief would therefore be discovered in the morning. The thief accordingly thinks to escape detection in the morning by cutting off an inch of his stick, and is, of course, in the morning detected as the witness against himself.

Or a spoonful of dry rice introduced with a certain amount of ceremony as enchanted, is given to each man to put in his mouth and chew, and they are told that the thief will be unable to swallow the rice.

The fear of detection will so upset the guilty man that he will be unable to swallow the dry rice, and thus will be self-convicted. I cannot, however, vouch myself, personally, for the success of these rather unconstitutional tribunals of justice.

It was at this time that our colonel, the Hon. Augustus Chichester, left the regiment, retiring from the service on half-pay. He left many friends and admirers in the regiment, among the foremost of whom the writer would gladly enrol himself.

He was succeeded in the command of the regiment by Major Henry Kent, an enthusiastic 77th man. Colonel Kent being, in addition to his devotion to the regiment, possessed of comfortable means and having no family, was able and very willing to give substantial help in supporting all regimental institutions during the whole period of his command; and this assistance he has continued since his retirement, and indeed is still continuing at the moment of my writing these lines.

As an instance of his devotion to all and everything connected with the regiment, it is said that he never passes a house with the number "77" on the door that he does not raise his hat to the memory of his beloved "Pothooks"!

The next move of the regiment was to Agra in 1869, and in February, 1870, we embarked for home. Here we had the distinction of being the first regiment that passed through the Suez Canal in a troopship; but we did not accomplish this feat without a slight accident that might have had troublesome results.

In making one of the bends of the canal the



troopship ran aground, and it was not easy to see how she was to be got off. I cannot say positively who was responsible for the happy suggestion by which this was accomplished. The whole of the regiment was formed up without arms on the opposite side of the deck to the place in the canal where she had struck, and were instructed to jump together on the word "jump" being given by the regimental sergeant-major. This was successfully done, and the steamship was got safely off.

We arrived at Portsmouth on May 25, 1870, and remained in this pleasant, but very unmilitary quarter, for eighteen months.

I was about this time fired with the desire of entering the Staff College, encouraged by the example of my brother subaltern of the Grenadier company, Charles Knowles, who had successfully competed for it when in India.

But, as it happened, another young officer of the regiment, William Forbes Gatacre, was also a competitor in the same year, and beat me at the post, one officer only from a regiment being admitted, at the same time, into the college. I was fairly and properly beaten, for I was, I knew, lamentably weak in mathematics, though I had a great liking for them.

Gatacre was a personal friend of mine, and I could honestly congratulate him on his success. He was a specially fine horseman, and showed his best on an awkward horse, for I have frequently seen a horse that would not look at a fence with an ordinary rider on its back, go over or through a hedge or gate with

Gatacre on its back without any apparent idea of refusal. Gatacre was also an excellent draughtsman, and possessed of an enterprising and intrepid spirit, with a perfect control of temper, and of great physical endurance. He had, in fact, most of the essential qualities for the making of a great soldier.

He was afterwards selected for special service in the Egyptian Campaign of 1898, where he commanded the British Brigade, and characteristically distinguished himself by personal gallantry in the attack of the Atbera stockade, leading the head of his brigade, and being the first man to lay his hand on the barrier of the zariba. Selected again for the important command of the British Brigade in the war in South Africa, his good fortune deserted him, and what might have proved one of the most successful enterprises of the campaign, failed through what might fairly be called a chapter of accidents.

To return to myself, my personal friendship with him was, I hope I need not say, in no way affected by his success in the competition for the Staff College; and when two years later I joined the college, he was the first to meet and congratulate me.

The two years that I spent at the Staff College were in many respects very enjoyable, and in one important respect the happiest and most fortunate in my life, as it was here that I met the one to whom I owe all the happiness that has since brightened my days; the one who has consistently shared my griefs and doubled my joys.

The two years that I spent at the Staff College, viz. 1875-76, as I have said, were pleasant ones in

many respects; but I fear that I can hardly write them down as profitable in military education, and this although there was at the head of the college a man so ably qualified to instruct in military science as Colonel Hamley, the author of our great military classic, "The Operations of War."

Personally I fear that I must confine the items of useful and practical professional knowledge acquired at the college to riding straight with the "Drag," and to the recognizing the distinction between a sailor's knot and a "granny."

It may be said that the fault was mine. Possibly it was so to some extent; but after leaving the college I ventured to put on paper certain suggestions for a more practical course of study, which I submitted to a number of old fellow students for their opinions.

The Drag recalls the days of many a good cross-country gallop. We had an excellent master in Captain Dick Lear, who combined the qualities essential for the success of a Master of Drag Hounds, being on good terms with the neighbouring farmers and landowners, a capital kennel huntsman, and though not too pushing in the field, yet always there or thereabouts at the finish.

Sir Evelyn Wood, who was then living near the college, would often join us for a gallop. I remember one day going out with him to lay out a line, and when we had finished and were parting, he turned his horse to ride home across country, it being, as he said, "the shortest way."

My first year at the college ended disastrously.

An examination was held at the end of the first year of the college course to test the progress of the students, and those who may fail to pass are excluded from further stay at the college. To my dismay and disgust I was reported as having failed to score the required number of marks in the mathematical paper. Indeed, I knew that I had not answered one of the problems, having forgotten the formula required for its solution; but I had not anticipated that this omission would have cost me so dearly. However, the mathematical professor of the college came to my aid, stating that I had given an intelligent attention to the course, and that I was one of the last in the class that he thought likely to fail, and Colonel Hamley very kindly supported my appeal, which ended by my obtaining a pass certificate owing to the general character of my papers.

The trial was a heavy one for me, as I felt that to have to leave the college would be for me to leave the service, as I could not rest satisfied with the ordinary routine of regimental duty.

During the last term of the course I paid a very pleasant visit to Germany in company with my friend Arthur Currie, of the Welsh Regiment, our object being to improve our German and to visit Waterloo. We made Heidelberg our headquarters, and found a comfortable home at the house of Baroness Von Hagen, a widow lady, whose husband had fought in the war of 1870. We lived in homely German style, and it was rather amusing at our first repast to find a baronial coat of arms inscribed on the back of our chairs, and a dish of tripe on the table.

We admired the scenery, saw with interest the big "tun," and visited the Heidelberg College students' café, where some of the students were to be seen with the marks of the sword duels that were still in those days in vogue. As in duty bound, we visited the field of Waterloo, and fought the great battle over again, and wondered what would have been the result in the map of Europe if Blucher had failed to redeem his promise of co-operation on that fateful day of June 18, 1815?

Though without any claim to being an expert whip I was always fond of a bit of driving, and finding a disused coach and harness for a team in the college stables, I begged and borrowed the horses from any one kind and sporting enough to lend them, and established a college drag.

We used to drive to cricket matches and to the annual Ascot, and without serious disaster, though on one occasion a slight accident caused some trouble and expense. We were on the way to Ascot, and going down a hill, perhaps a little too fast, as we turned a corner I found an empty carriage and pair in front, and a little out of its proper line. I pulled the wheelers away, but as will happen with a heavy load going fast they did not answer the reins, and the axle of my front wheel caught that of the carriage and nearly carried it away. I pulled up as soon as possible, and gave the coachman my card with apologies, and asked him to let me know the cost of repairs. This he did not forget to do, and I received subsequently a very pretty little bill for the repair of that axle bar.

I must confess that our teams were a bit ragged, and I do not think that the description by an outsider of our coach leaving the ground at Ascot was very far amiss: "When Bengough's coach leaves the course each horse seems to start in a different direction!"

The riding school was, I am afraid, a bit of a trial for those who preferred their own feet for movement to a horse's four, and I remember the difficulty that our riding master, an ex-cavalry man, had in bringing us up to anything like his own standard of equitation. He would say pathetically, "Some of you gentlemen seem to think that when you can sit on a 'orse without falling off you can ride. Why that's only the H'A, B, C of riding." He was no doubt an excellent riding master, and how he managed to get some of us over the fences in the outside riding school, at the final examination, with stirrups crossed over the saddle, was a marvel.

In 1870 I took a trip to Pau, to pay a visit to my eldest brother, George, who was staying there for his health, and to make a personal acquaintance with the Pyrenees.

I did not see a great deal of that pleasant and beautiful summer resort, as the hills were calling me away, and I had visions of stalking chamois, etc., and of ultimately finding my way into Northern Spain.

I found a comrade to accompany me, and we thoroughly enjoyed the days passed amongst those glorious mountains, though we never fired a shot with a rifle.

One little incident I remember, trifling in itself, but one that I am not likely to forget readily. One

afternoon, after tramping the hills in the hope of a possible bit of sport we sat down to rest, feeling a little fagged, by a clear mountain well or pit of water, and I accidentally dropped my favourite pipe into it. I could see my old friend at the bottom of the pool, some 7 or 8 feet deep ; but there was nothing at hand to help me to regain it, so I returned, rather sadly, to our little mountain auberge with the intention of returning in the morning, prepared for a dive. Had I known the temperature of a pool of water in the Pyrenees, some 6,000 feet above the sea, I think it probable that that pipe might be there to-day ; but I was young, and greatly attached to my pipe, and I determined to try and rescue my friend in the morning from its watery grave.

It was cold work, I remember, disrobing at the spot at early morn, but there was no going back now, and I made the plunge.

It is impossible, I think, to describe the sensation of a plunge into ice cold water. It is, as it were, the negation of sensation ; the body seems shrivelled up into some primeval atom. And then the joy of return to air and earth, and, in my case, in company with the beloved pipe.

It was not long after this that we made a long march into the Spanish frontier. Arriving at a small mountain hotel, tired and hungry, we ordered some dinner ; but we found all the courses, from the soup onwards, so richly flavoured with garlic, that we decided on an early return to the Pyrenees, and this, I am now sorry to confess, completed our contemplated visit to Northern Spain.

I do not remember that many of my comrades during my two years' course at the Staff College had the good fortune to distinguish themselves in after days, with the notable exception of Thomas Kelly-Kenny, a keen supporter of the college Drag, now General Sir Thomas Kelly-Kenny, G.C.B., G.C.V.O., who served for many years on the Staff, and commanded a Division in the Boer War with distinction.

He stands out now for remembrance for his shrewd good sense and happy Irish wit, as well as for his kindly temperament. He was our Mess President, and one of his canny remedies for a grumbler at mess was as simple as effective, "Put him on the Mess Committee!"

Another instance of his practical sense of humour is perhaps worth quoting. A group of officers in command of regiments were discussing at their club their several systems of regimental discipline, and much stress was placed by some on the strict punctuality of the commanding officer. Kelly-Kenny coming up, was asked what was his practice. "Oh," he said, "I just teach my officers to learn to wait, like anything else."

Before I left the college another disappointment awaited me. I had made fair progress in my German by my trip abroad, and never found much difficulty in making myself understood, and as we were allowed to take up any foreign language as an extra in the final examination, I selected German with some confidence.

The examination was written and oral. I found little difficulty in the papers, and presented myself for the conversational test with little misgiving.



On approaching the professor, he opened on me with, "Vill you explain to me vat is the 'Drag' that you hunt here in the college?" I was nonplussed. I could find no words even to start with. I could not think of any German synonym for "Drag," and could not even find a word for a "red herring"! I stood speechless, and was politely bowed out by the professor.

My marriage took place at the Farnborough parish church on December 21, 1876, and after a happy honeymoon spent in Paris, we returned to England, and I rejoined the regiment in Ireland at Newry—as a brevet major by seniority.

I had now become the owner of a handy little Irish horse, my first charger, bought at Tattersalls, which proved to be a very clever little hunter, and made an excellent charger, and smart in harness. "Paddy" shared my fortunes for fifteen years, and I parted with him to a friend in India, to be treated kindly, when I finally left that country some thirteen years afterwards.

It was now, also, that I had the good fortune to engage as servant and groom a smart soldier and faithful follower, William Guppy, of my old regiment, who followed my fortunes until shortly before his death, some twenty-five years later.

From Newry the regiment moved to the Curragh, on July 31, 1878, to take part in a camp of exercise, and Colonel Kent becoming our Brigadier, I, as senior major, found myself in the proud position of commanding the regiment, a privilege which I greatly appreciated.

I cannot remember that we learnt any great tactical lessons at the camp of exercise, but drill, as drill, always had an attraction for me. The combined movement of masses of men, were it only a corporal's guard, under the control of the commander, seemed to represent a force something more than human, and the greater the unit the more imposing the representation.

But there was even better good fortune than the command of an infantry battalion at peace manœuvres awaiting me, for the necessity of sending troops to South Africa had arisen, and I rejoiced to find myself detailed to proceed there at once on special service.

I accordingly embarked, with my faithful servant, William Guppy, on board the Union s.s. *Roman*, the steamer taken up for the details under orders for South Africa, and which carried a goodly number of officers bound for the same destination. We had much speculation on the voyage as to our respective destinations, as none of us had, I believe, received any definite instructions on this point.

We reached Port Elizabeth in due time, and landed in a very choppy sea in one of those miserable little tugs that in those days were the only means of communication with the mainland.

I made the best of my way to Pietermaritzburg, travelling in a four-in-hand coach, and reported myself to Colonel Durnford, Royal Engineers, who commanded the troops there, and was very kindly received by him.

He informed me that I was to take over the command of the 2nd Battalion, Natal Native

Contingent, then being formed for service in the Zulu campaign.

I was much struck with Colonel Durnford's soldier-like manner, which indeed I soon found to be a truthful indication of his character. His early death in action was a national loss.

I must confess that my first introduction to my command was something of a disappointment. To come from the command of a British regiment to take charge of a body of untrained Kafirs seemed something like a descent ; but the prospect of service in the field made full amends for any such misgivings.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE ZULU CAMPAIGN

I FELT that my first duty on being introduced to my new command was to gain some knowledge of my men's language. I had dipped into a Zulu grammar and dictionary on our passage out, and I had already formed the idea of compiling a phrase book of military terms in the Zulu language for the use of officers and non-commissioned officers in charge of native troops. In this idea I received much kindly and useful assistance from those acquainted with the language in Pietermaritzburg.

I adopted what is, I venture to think, a slight but useful innovation on the ordinary phrase-book system, in which it is often difficult to know what word answers to another. My plan was simply to have the several words in the English sentences numbered from "1" upwards, and then the Zulu equivalents being similarly numbered the reader will know at once the meaning of each separate word.

A short example will exemplify the system—

1	2	3		3	2	1
That is well done				Kwenziwe kahle zowo		

I was pleased to learn later that Bishop Colenso had expressed his approval of the little book.

A Durban newspaper has the following :—

“ We noticed the other day a little Zulu Military Phrase Book and Vocabulary, compiled by Major Bengough, of the 77th Regiment, and now in command of the 2nd battalion of the 1st Regiment of the Natal Native Contingent. It may not be generally known that, until Major Bengough landed at Durban a very few weeks ago, he was a total stranger to the Zulu language, of which he has since, by adding hard and constant study to a natural talent for languages, made himself complete master. Such an incident is, we believe, almost without parallel, and it is only fair to say that the Zulu language is only one out of many which have been acquired by the same officer in the same way. It seems a pity that Major Bengough did not live at the time of the building of the Tower of Babel. Had he done so, he might have seriously influenced the course of the world's history.”

I had little time to spare at the moment in the study of philology, but having a strong amateur love of languages I found later much in the Zulu tongue to interest and attract. Under its proper philological name of “ Bantu ” = “ Abantu ” = the people, it has spread over half Africa, and, though until quite recent times there has been no written standard, yet the language has remained practically unaffected by the several local dialects. It is said that the Bantu children never make mistakes in their grammar !

One of the peculiarities of the Bantu family ~~of~~ tongues is that of the characteristic prefixes to nouns, about ten in number, that affect the verb and adjective and pronoun, in conjunction with the noun. There is no article or gender, curiously in this respect resembling Latin, Sanscrit, Persian, Turkish, Hindustani, and Russian.

The "clicks" are not so frequent in Zulu Kafir as in the Namaqua and Hottentot dialects. In Zulu Kafir they are three in number, viz.—

Dental "C" = exclamation of disappointment!

Palatal "g" = cluck of a hen or pop of a bottle.

Lateral "x" = urging on a horse.

It has been suggested that the purity and uniformity of the language may perhaps be due, to some extent at least, to the common phonetic system of the Bantu group, which is at once simple and harmonious, requiring all words to end in a vowel, rejecting all consonantal juxtapositions, except a few characteristic nasal combinations, such as *ng*, *mb*, *nd*, and the like.

Their national laws and customs are on an elaborate system, and several of the latter resemble those of the Jews, such as the Feast of First Fruits held upon the ripening of the maize, and the custom of raising up seed to a deceased brother.

The Bantu tongue includes the Hlonipa or Woman's language, common to many of the Oriental branch, by which women are forbidden to mention the name of their husband or his relations. The practice is common throughout the East, and an incident is

recorded in Schuyler's "Turkestan," in which "a Kirghiz woman wished to say that a wolf had stolen a sheep and taken it to the reedy shore of the lake. Unfortunately the men of the family bore names corresponding to most of these words, and she was obliged to gasp out that 'in the rustling beyond the wet a growler gnaws one of our woollies.'"

Ceremonial salutations and expressions of respect are very dignified in the Zulu language. Of this I had an impressive experience when I rode daily on to the battalion parade in the morning to be received by a thousand assegais raised aloft, and a thousand rather guttural voices uttering together the single word "Inkos" = Chief.

The Natal Zulus, though not of quite the same physique as the true Zulu Kafirs, average nearly two inches higher than the average European. They are intelligent, honest, cheery, and chatty, fond of snuffing, smoking, and beer, though I never saw a Zulu drunk. They have a lively sense of humour, and soon found appropriate names for the battalion officers, such as "The Little One," "The Stammerer," "The Hawk," my own cognomen being, I believe, "The Rock Splitter," from the rather rough marches that I used to take them sometimes.

The little drill that we taught them was some simple column movements, and to march past, which they very quickly picked up; to present arms, and to move to a flank by "Fives right," which they understood more readily than by "Fours."

The words of command were given in English.

The plan of campaign for the invasion of Zululand was briefly by four columns converging so as to meet at a certain spot in the enemies' country. These columns were commanded respectively by Colonel Pearson, Colonel Glyn, Colonel Wood, and Colonel Durnford. The tactical objections to such a disposition are, of course, obvious, viz. the isolation of the several columns on the march, and the difficulty of uniting on the field of battle; but on the other hand, there were weighty reasons for its adoption in (1) the length of a single column, (2) the necessity of the defence of the frontier—some 150 miles,—and (3) the political necessity of covering the Transvaal.

The Natal Native Contingent had been mainly raised by, and was under the command of, Colonel Durnford, C.B., Royal Engineers, and consisted of the following troops:—

A Rocket Battery under Captain Russell, Royal Artillery.

Two squadrons Mounted Basutos.

Three battalions Natal Native Contingent.

My command was that of the 2nd Battalion of the Native Contingent.

I cannot speak too highly of the officers of the battalion. Where all were good men, anxious to give of their best, it is difficult for me, writing now at this date thirty-five years later, to do justice to all, so I must content myself with a reference to those who came more closely under my own observation.

My adjutant, Captain Bettington, was a natural soldier: smart, active in person, firm in action, sound in counsel, he was not long in getting in touch with



officers and non-commissioned officers, and his tact and firmness made my own duties sensibly easier. He was an excellent horseman, and later in the war raised a mounted regiment that did good service in the field as Bettington's Horse.

My interpreter, Mr. Guyse Kinsman, had been long settled in the colony, and had acquired a close acquaintance with the native character, with a complete command of the language. I have never known any one who could translate from one language to another as freely and effectively as he could. When I wished to address the battalion on parade, Kinsman would stand by my side and without any previous knowledge of what I was about to say, the words would roll out from his mouth with the same emphasis and appropriate gesticulation as from my own. His knowledge of the ways and customs of the natives was invaluable, and as will be seen later in my story, his influence with the chiefs and the men was, more than once, the means of saving a delicate situation.

Of the other officers of the battalion I remember with grateful appreciation of loyal service always readily rendered, Captain W. T. Openshaw, Captain E. H. Boord, Captain Worthington, Captain Highton, Captain Spiers, Captain Vetch, Captain Willoughby, Lieutenants J. R. Galley, G. W. Heathcote, A. A. Worsley, G. Tyrrell, B. Southwell Granville, and others whose names, I regret, I am unable to recall.

The constitution and armament of a battalion of Natal Native Infantry was as follows :—

Ten companies of one hundred rank and file, all carrying the native weapon, the assegai, and ten per

cent. armed with rifles with 200 rounds of ball ammunition.

The British non-commissioned officers were armed and equipped as usual.

The native chief of the tribe composing the battalion was a fine old Zulu warrior, by name Homoi, seventy years old, who had fought against us in his earlier days; but was now a loyal British subject. His influence with the men was paramount, and his loyalty to the British flag was sometimes severely strained, but never failed, and his personal devotion to myself resulted at the end of operations in an almost comical fiasco.

Soon after Christmas, 1878, Colonel Durnford's command moved out from Pietermaritzburg by separate columns, in the direction of the Buffalo River.

I should mention here that, as far as I know, no instructions as to the enforcement of discipline with the native troops were issued to commanders of units.

At the end of the second day's march it was reported to me that one of the battalion non-commissioned officers had on the march refused to obey a command of the officer of his company. It appeared necessary that such a breach of discipline should be dealt with summarily, and a court-martial was assembled, to whom it was pointed out that the ordinary punishment of imprisonment could not be carried out on the march, and that corporal punishment must necessarily be substituted.

The non-commissioned officer was found guilty and sentenced to be reduced to the ranks and to

receive twenty-five lashes. The adjutant, Lieut. Bettington, found a non-commissioned officer who had been a drummer in the infantry, and who knew the use of the "cat," and the punishment was inflicted in the presence of the European portion of the battalion in a secluded spot.

I believe that I was legally guilty of the crime of "an assault," but I am persuaded that the effect on the battalion was all for good.

Our next halting place was at Mr. Dellmaine's farm, where we arrived in heavy rain and with no tents, the wagons having broken down on the heavy roads.

"A correspondent with Colonel Durnford's column in the 2nd Battalion, 1st Regiment, N.N.C., sends us an interesting diary, from which we give the following, written at Mr. Dellmaine's farm, at which he arrived on the 31st, with 'no tents, wagon stuck':—

"*January 1.*—A report was flying round the camp that the Zulus are threatening the border, and we are under orders to march at 10 a.m., with or without wagons. Everything is wet and dirty. The men seem to be imbued with a very warlike spirit, and are very anxious for the first shot to be fired. The owner of the farm here, Mr. Dellmaine, is a first-rate fellow. We marched to Pot Spruit at 12.30 p.m., wet to the skin. Halted a quarter of an hour, and then came on hither in a rain storm.

"*January 2.*—Still raining and very miserable, no tents up yet, expect them every minute, we are in sight of the Tugela valley, and some of the enemy are within sight on the opposite side of the river, can see

them only with a glass. Parade at 10 a.m. for rifle practice, expecting more natives hourly ; so far, however, only four companies 2nd Battalion and five companies 1st Battalion. I only hope that the natives will arrive soon and the work begin in earnest. Two companies ordered away at once, Capt. Vetch's and Boord's to Krans Kop. Major Bengough made a very spirited speech to the troops before going, and the men seemed as if they appreciated it. Rifle practice for natives for two hours, sun just come out, 10 a.m., quite a treat after such a spell of bad weather. Mounted parade at 2.30 p.m., had a very curious and amusing sham fight. It was really very well conducted, and I think the 'wily Zulu' will find us a tough lot. 1 p.m., commenced to rain again, and looks as if it intended to continue ; we have not marched out yet, 7 p.m., so will get our morning sleep. What a treat !

"*January 3.*—Enemy's fires observed during the night to the number of thirteen. Have heard that two 'wily Zulus' have been captured (spies ?). I doubt it very much, as no one can say for certain if it is true. Tried to drill a company of natives to-day in English, and after a little trouble did succeed in teaching them fives right and fives left. Of course some were stupid. I am certain that no white man could form fives as they do. It is done with a sort of hop or skip into their proper places. One of our subs has done a valiant deed by capturing our 'out-lying picquet,' taking them for the enemy. No harm done by zeal ! We expect to be attacked as soon as we cross the river, and the men seem very anxious to

be off from here. I hear this evening from a reliable source that the Zulus have assembled three heavy columns to oppose our forces, viz. 15,000 at the Tugela Drift (the Mouth), 15,000 at Helpmakaar, and a force of 1000 at Krantzkop, with a heavy force in reserve. I believe they never show their entire strength, so things may be rather warm for us yet. Ordered to march at 3 a.m. to-morrow to protect party working on road to drift in case of an attack. Tugela River reported very much lower, and quite fordable. Very little sickness; and what there is is through the extreme bad weather.

“On the afternoon of our arrival at Dundee, about 5 o'clock, a mounted man rode into camp with a message from an officer of the King's Dragoon Guards, who was out scouting along the Buffalo with twelve men, to the effect that he had witnessed about 1000 natives cross that river on to our side, and prepare to bivouac. This put the whole camp in a ferment for some time, and one troop was at once ordered to be mounted, ready for any emergency. After sending over a copy of the message to Colonel Glyn in the laager, we learnt that the supposed enemy was only a battalion of Native Infantry, under Major Bengough, which was on its march from the Umsinga to Landman's Drift, and had crossed over into Zululand burning kraals and reconnoitring.”

Not long after our arrival at Dundee Colonel Durnford came to me and asked me when I should be able to move on? Having anticipated such a question, I had made arrangements for carriage, and was able to reply, “At once, sir.”

The result of this apparently trifling incident carried with it the result that the 2nd Battalion Natal Native Contingent was the only native battalion to take part in subsequent active operations.

I was directed to cross the Buffalo River at a given point, and there to await orders.

On the afternoon of January 22, 1879, I crossed the river by a ford as directed. It was the first time that a force of Natal Zulus had ever crossed into Zululand, and the men were proportionately excited and pleased with themselves, eating medicines, and sprinkling themselves after their fashion.

Towards evening Kinsman, my interpreter, came to me and said that a Zulu had just come in with the report of the English "impi" having been destroyed (lit. "eaten up") at a place called Isandhlwana, and the English "boss" killed. From his description he evidently meant to describe Colonel Durnford, as Lord Chelmsford was not in the camp at the time. He added that a Zulu impi was on its way to "eat us up."

The matter was, in any case, serious and urgent, and I had to decide, without delay, on what should be done. Had our position been defensible, I should have been inclined to hold it, as the men were, as I have said, in great fettle at being on Zulu ground, and the rocks on which we were, surrounded by the river, seemed to offer at first sight reasonable means of defence; but the river was fordable almost anywhere, and the rocks would offer but little real defence to the active Zulu, so I decided on evacuating our position and on taking up a post on the high ground on the Natal side of the river.

It was fortunate that this was done, for we heard the next morning that an impi had been sent down from Isandhlwana to "eat us up." This information reached us on our march to Helpmakaar, where I expected to receive orders as to our next movements, being as yet in ignorance of the death in action on the fatal field of Isandhlwana of our good commander.

We had not proceeded far on our way when our scouts reported the presence of hostile Zulus ahead.

I rode forward with Kinsman, my interpreter, and found that the report was unfounded, the Zulus seen being friendly; but it served to show the little reliance placed by our men on the drill formations in which they had been so carefully instructed, for on rejoining the battalion I found that the company formation had been entirely given up, and the men, having laid aside their rifles, had gathered round their several native chiefs, assegais in hand, apparently determined to make a stand after their own fashion.

On reaching Helpmakaar, I received a detailed account of the unfortunate disaster to our arms at Isandhlwana on the previous day, and how it was our own gallant commander, Colonel Durnford, who had met his death on the field, and not the general commanding the forces, Lord Chelmsford.

It seemed to me that my proper course was to put myself at once under the order of the Commander-in-Chief of the forces.

I accordingly gave the order to march at once to Rorke's Drift. We had not gone far when we met some men of another Natal Zulu battalion, much

demoralized, and entirely out of control, and besides this I learnt that they were persuading our own men to desert, and that in fact the men carrying rifles and ammunition were deserting, and in some instances joining the enemy with arms and ammunition. I felt that this must be prevented at any risk, and I could see no way other than the disarming of these men, who numbered some ten per cent. of the battalion. I asked Kinsman if he thought that the men would give up their arms if ordered to do so. He hesitated to reply, but agreed that the attempt should be made.

The battalion was accordingly formed up, and after being instructed as to what was required of them, the command "ground arms" was given, and to my agreeable surprise, was obeyed.

I then told the men in whose possession the arms were, that they might return to their kraals until again called out.

Soon after this I saw Lord Chelmsford, with his staff, riding up the road towards me, and leading, as was often his custom on the march, a spare horse.

I rode up to him and reported what I had done, and added that in the place of my unstable battalion, I begged to place the services of the mounted officers of the battalion and myself at his disposal for any duty that he might assign to us.

Lord Chelmsford seemed angry, and told me that I had no right to dismiss any man without his leave, and that I was to recall all those whom I had allowed to leave the battalion, and that he would speak to the battalion on parade the next morning at Helpmakaar.



I quite understood my General's point of view, and saluted and returned to the battalion and gave the necessary orders.

I have since, from time to time, reconsidered my action in this matter, and the view taken of it by my General, and always with the result that I came to the conclusion that under similar circumstances I should again act in the same way as I here acted, and that if I were in Lord Chelmsford's place I should probably take the same view of my action that he did.

We spent the night in bivouac at Helpmakaar, where the wounded had been brought from Rorke's Drift; and among these were many whose nerves had been shaken by the past night of horrors, and who would from time to time utter shrill screams of terror, with cries of "Are they coming?"

In the morning, what was left of the battalion paraded according to orders, and Lord Chelmsford addressed the men through an interpreter, encouraging them to stand fast to their regiment, and added that they were to go to a spot, Umsinga, some ten miles west of Helpmakaar, to protect the magistracy and prevent the enemy from breaking over the border into Natal.

We accordingly found the spot indicated, a bit of high ground commanding the main road to Helpmakaar, and here we remained until the middle of May, 1879, when we joined the 2nd Division under the command of General Newdigate.

It was during the quiet time passed at "Fort Bengough," as our little post was dignified by being called in after days, that I was able to make a mental

survey of the stirring times past, and to visit personally the scenes of action.

The disposition of the attacking columns has been adversely criticized, but perhaps without due consideration of the political and strategic requirements.

It was essential, for instance, to extend the frontage of the advance, so as to cover as far as possible the 150 miles of defensive frontier, and thus prevent inroads by the Zulus.

It was also necessary, for political reasons, to cover the Transvaal State, and tactically it was desirable to avoid the length of a single column, which would necessarily take a considerable time to deploy and come into action.

It is true that the dispersion of the columns was in a sense responsible for the disaster of Isandhlwana, but the actual cause of our defeat must be sought in the tactical errors of the local position, for it is a common-place in war that tactical errors will upset the best strategy.

The war was, it may safely be said, both politically and morally justifiable. It was practically a war of self-defence, for 20,000 white men lay at the mercy of 320,000 black. As the colonists in Natal used to express it, "If you must live next door to a tiger, you must draw its teeth." The attitude of Cetshwayo, the Zulu King, to the Natal Government was little less than hostile, and he had openly on parade declared to his regiment his desire to "wash his spears." Like Napoleon III., he was unable to control his own army, and in Sir Robert Frere he found a ruler with a well-known character for

clemency and modesty amounting almost to self-abasement.

It was under such conditions that active operations commenced. A plan of campaign was drawn up, and working parties were sent to repair the road to Mid Drift, where they were met by Bishop Schroeder, who personally wished success to our arms. Colonel Durnford with the Natal Carbineers and the Rocket Battery pushed on to the position taken up by our troops at Isandhlwana or Isandula.

The meaning of this word has considerably exercised Zulu philologists. Isandhlwana has been taken to mean "a little hand," and the hill has indeed a distinct resemblance to an uplifted hand; but the letter "w" is a difficulty. "Isandhla" is in the Zulu vernacular a "little house for weapons." And so the question of derivation must rest. I may add that natives whom I have questioned say that they know no meaning for the word.

The name is, however, indelibly impressed on our national records as the scene of a heroic defence of a temporary post held by some sixty men of the 24th Regiment against a horde of some three thousand Zulus, and a no less heroic combat of the scattered force of a British regiment opposed to a swarm of some 10,000 Zulu warriors.

I do not propose to attempt a detailed description of these two memorable feats of arms, which far abler pens than mine have graphically described; but I would venture to offer some few words of suggestion rather than of criticism on the disaster that befell British arms on this fateful day.

I realize with what comfortable feelings of self-satisfaction the military critic can, sitting at ease in his armchair, point out the various causes that may have converted what might have been a brilliant victory into a dismal defeat. At the same time it must be allowed that the armchair critic is in a position, having all the facts and features at his elbow, to form a dispassionate opinion impossible to a commander in the heat of contest.

I would suggest, then, that ignorance of, or failure to appreciate, the manner of the Zulu attack, was a highly contributory cause of our defeat. As is now well known, the Zulu impi represented ten thousand men, and was divided into what the Zulus term the *horns*, the *chest*, and the *body* of the army, corresponding to our wings, supports, and reserve. It was the duty of the horns—which really took the shape of horns, converging inwards—to circle round the flanks of the enemy, only a few men forming the points of the horns, which gradually increased to ten, twelve, or more at the base. The enemy once encompassed by the horns, the chest advanced in open, but deep, order; then followed the body in a dense mass, with crushing effect.

Such a formation must necessarily violate the tactical principles of the attack, as it exposes the attacking force to defeat in detail, whereas tactical success is to be found in the opposing a superior force, whether in numbers, arms, or position, to an inferior force at the point and moment of attack.

But perhaps what contributed most to the disaster of Isandhlwana was the dogma that wherever and

whenever a Zulu is seen he is to be attacked. It was the belief in the truth of this axiom that, as it seems to me, induced the dispersion of troops on this fateful field, and converted what might have been a campaign of a few weeks into a serious national war.

A secondary, though a fatefully contributory cause of the disaster, was the absence of any satisfactory arrangement for the supply and distribution of ammunition on the field. For this the regiment was in no way responsible. Indeed, it is right to state that application for appliances for this purpose was made when the second battalion of the regiment was still at Greytown. The reply was to the effect that "the articles applied for are not in store;" and it was further observed that "however useful and necessary such appliances may be in European warfare, it is not expected that they will be required in a war such as the troops are about to enter upon." The officer responsible for the above piece of pedantic officialism will no doubt have regretfully remembered that it is always the unexpected that occurs in war.

The Regimental Records of this date, in speaking of the disaster, say, "Turn where we will, the same story of the disaster is traced in broad characters; extended formations against savages whose hand-to-hand fighting was alone to be feared, and failure of ammunition. When this failed, there was no hope. It is known that Quartermaster Bloomfield, 2nd Battalion, 24th, met his death while trying with others to untie the ammunition boxes on the mules, and that mules with ammunition boxes on them were

to be seen plunging and kicking over the field, maddened with fear."

The Regimental Records continue: "But little is known of the conflict in and around the camp. So swift was the disaster, that it is easy to understand that the few survivors should be unable to give any very reliable or consecutive account of the details. The evidence of the dead, as afterwards found and buried where they lay, told the one unvarying tale of groups of men fighting back to back until the last cartridge was spent.

"Zulu witnesses, after the war, all told the same story: 'At first we could make no way against the soldiers, but suddenly they ceased to fire; then we came round them, and threw our spears until we had killed them all.' By 1.30 p.m. no white man was alive in Isandhlwana camp. According to one account the last survivor was a drummer of the 24th, who was seen to fling his short sword at a Zulu."

It is with a sense of relief that one turns from the gallant, though unsuccessful, contest on the field of Isandhlwana to the heroic defence by a few officers and men of the same regiment of an important post and a hospital with its sick and wounded, which was successfully defended by some sixty men of the 2nd Battalion, 24th Regiment, under Lieutenant Bromhead, and a few volunteers and departmental officers, the whole under Lieutenant Chard, Royal Engineers, and held for twelve hours against the determined attack of some three thousand Zulus, three hundred and seventy of whose dead bodies were found around the post.

The difficulties and the responsibilities of the defence of this post were greatly increased by the fact of it including a hospital, in which were seven patients. The building was set on fire by the Zulus, but most of the patients were rescued, though with considerable loss to the small number of the defenders. As I write these lines I have before me an inset in the current number of the *Sunday Companion* of "John Williams, V.C., the sole survivor of the gallant few who saved the sick from the burning hospital at Rorke's Drift, on February 3, 1879, the last of his famous comrades."

At the time that I visited the spot so little change had been made that it was easy to recognize the progress of the fight. I was also able to follow the route taken by Lieutenant Melville, the adjutant 1st battalion, 24th, and Lieutenant A. Coghill, orderly officer to Colonel Glyn, in their endeavour to save the Queen's colour of the battalion, the regimental colour having been left with the detachment remaining at Helpmakaar. Both officers, though pursued by Zulus, succeeded in reaching the Buffalo River, then in flood, and in ordinary cases considered impassable. They plunged their horses in, and Coghill got across, but Melville, encumbered by the colour, got separated from his horse, and was washed against a large rock in mid-stream. Coghill at once rode back into the stream to his aid. But by this time the Zulus had gathered thick on the bank of the river, and opened fire, making a special target of Melville, who wore his red patrol jacket. Coghill's horse was killed, and his rider cast adrift in the

stream. Notwithstanding the exertions made to save it, the colour had to be abandoned, and the two officers themselves only succeeded in reaching the opposite bank with great difficulty and in a most exhausted state. They appear to have kept together, and to have got within twenty yards of the summit, when they were overtaken by their foes and fell.

On February 4, 1879, Lieut.-Colonel Black, who in a previous reconnaissance had found the bodies of Melville and Coghill close to a huge boulder, against which they appear to have stood to fight, for around them lay several dead Zulus, succeeded in recovering the Queen's colour, and handed it over to Colonel Glyn, then commanding the 2nd battalion of the South Wales Borderers.



## CHAPTER IX

### ULUNDI

It was now that I had the first real opportunity of studying the characteristics and the manners and customs of the interesting race of which my soldiers were composed.

And first as to the number of desertions. I found that most of the men after visiting their kraals returned and rejoined the ranks as if nothing had happened, so that it became impossible to punish them. The deserters were, however, generally hooted on their return.

With the recollection of the disaster at Isandhlwana fresh in their memories, it did not seem likely that they would be very reliable to stem the Zulu inroad over the border, and so to give them confidence in themselves and to find employment for them, I planned the outline of a small fort or redoubt for about a thousand men. The men took up the idea readily, and with the aid of two crowbars and a few spades and pickaxes the work was soon done. Our redoubt was composed of a plumb wall some six feet high, and between three or four feet thick, and with two flanking bastions in the centre of the fort. Alarm posts were assigned to each company. On the completion of the fort I took our chief Zulu to see it.

He asked me, "What is this for?" I said, "This is a fort; if the Zulus from over the river attack us here, we go into the fort and shoot them down." The old chief shook his head, looking very knowing, and said, "No, you don't think that we are going to be caught here, like rats in a trap! Why, how are we going to run away?"

I may add that they afterwards began to appreciate, at any rate, the value of loopholes.

It was not long after the completion of our fort that an alarm was given of an attack by the Zulus. A picquet was sent out, and some rather indiscriminate firing was begun; and as I was going round the defences, an over-zealous member of the garrison fired his rifle from between my legs and wounded one of the picquet.

On going round the posts in the fort it was impressive to hear the men sharpening their assegais. I noticed this to my interpreter, Kinsman, who replied, "Yes, sir, they mean to fight!"

We all slept in the fort ready dressed to turn out, boots and all. This we did for several months, and I never, I think, slept more soundly. In the daytime I had plenty to do, being my own Commissariat Officer, Quartermaster, and Paymaster. I will not add "and cook," for the culinary art is one in which I have always signally failed to achieve any success.

Our bread for the officers' mess was baked with sour dough in an underground oven, often in an ant-hill, a barrel being sunk longitudinally half-way in the ground, the top covered with mud, and the wooden staves being set on fire.

I need not say that we were all teetotallers, or add that the health of the troops was excellent. I found a decided increase in my weight.

I was much impressed with the calm courage with which the District Magistrate maintained his position on the frontier, as did also the members of the Scotch and German Missions. The latter mission station was sacked by the Zulus, but the Argyle Presbyterian School Mission was untouched. The minister thereof paid us several welcome visits, when we sang together "Hold the Fort," with a vigour, inspired perhaps not a little by the accident of our material position at the moment.

The stage at which we have arrived in my story may be appropriate for the consideration of the much-debated question of the fighting qualities of the Natal Zulu. It must be granted, I think, that the fighting qualities of a body of men is not necessarily dependent on the aggregate courage of the individuals composing that body, but is rather subject to some exterior controlling power, as discipline, or some strong moral lever, such as patriotism, confidence in their cause, or their numbers, or their weapons, or their discipline, or their commander, or their position, or all or any of these combined.

In almost all these latter requisites the Natal Zulus were lacking. Discipline they knew not even by name ; as to patriotism, they were fighting under an alien race against their own kinsmen, whom they knew to be vastly superior in numbers, and of the military training of their new leaders they understood nothing ; moreover, by placing a foreign weapon in

their hands their trust in the national weapon, the assegai, was discounted. The only point making for superiority was their hatred of the Zulus of Zululand, by whom, indeed, they had been expelled from their country. But this was hardly sufficient to make them fit to fight side by side of trained soldiers.

Thus the proper sphere for the Zulu battalions was undoubtedly that of outpost duty—spies and scouts—thus pitting native against native. It was in this way that they were eventually utilized on the advance to Ulundi. An English soldier fresh from a barrack square is useless opposed to a wily native. They are easily stalked and stabbed. My men used to take post on hills two or three miles from the encampment.

There was a difficulty in recognizing them in the case of an attack, and a plan of lanterns to be lighted by the picquets on retiring was tried, though not altogether successfully.

During our stay in the fort the reorganization and re-armament of the Natal Native Contingent was carried out.

The new arms were 300 Martini-Henri rifles and 200 Sniders. The use of the arms and the breech action were quickly learnt by our men, and rifle practice was regularly carried out, badges being given to marksmen, and figures of merit were awarded to the companies, and were keenly contested.

The back-sight was never quite understood, and was, I believe, considered by the men to possess some magic power.

The drill was simplified, fives being used in the

place of fours, and each company had a distinguishing flag.

The social customs of the Zulus are quaint. In a marriage contract the bridegroom pays the dower to the bride's father, who thus practically sells his daughter. In Natal the free choice of a girl bride is secured by the presence of a Government witness. In Zululand, regiments are only permitted to marry by order of the King, so that husbands are generally over forty years old, and love matches are not common. The strict virtue of Zulu girls is remarkable. The national religion is somewhat vague. The Great Creator (Nkulukulu), a spirit existing by itself, forms a beautiful maiden out of mud and water and takes her to wife. They believe in the transmigration of souls, their ancestors being transformed into snakes, to whom they pray. Their idea of right and wrong is the fear of offending these.

The witch doctors are an important element in the national belief. A candidate for the divining power retires into the bush, where he lives for months on roots, frogs, snails, and the like, until he becomes gifted with the divining power, or divine inflatus, and is able to detect a criminal by the process known as "smelling out."

Example:—It is apparently something like the principle of "Magic Music." Some cows die suddenly in a village.

Umzibu dwells in this village.  
He has many wives, sons, and daughters.  
„ many mealies in store.  
„ many cattle in his kraal.  
„ suffered a loss.

"We hear, we hear."  
Do.  
Do.  
Do.  
Do.

He has not lost a wife or child.	"We hear, we hear."
„ not lost any mealies.	Do.
Some of his cows have died.	Loud music.
Umzibu has enemies.	Do.
His cows have been bewitched.	Do.
His enemies are not of this kraal.	Do.
He has an enemy in Nodwengo kraal.	Do.
He is a relation (a shot in the dark).	Low music.
He is not a relation, but professes to be a friend.	Loud music.
His name is So-and-so.	

The case is then reported to the King, who generally sends an "impi" to kill the man and seize his goods and cattle.

A curious example of the above occurred among my men.

A man was taken on suspicion of being a witch doctor one night, and Kinsman, my interpreter, intervened, knowing the summary manner in which such cases are generally settled. Suddenly a sort of wild cat appeared between the suspect's feet. There was a cry of "There is his familiar." The cat was killed, and I have the skin. The man somewhat mysteriously disappeared. It appeared afterwards that he had been suspected of stealing wood.

Though we certainly had not a very enlivening experience of life in our fort, yet I cannot remember that we found time hang very heavily on our hands. Our military exercises and rifle practice provided us with a certain amount of occupation, and there was always the possibility of a raid across the frontier by the Zulus, not unnaturally elated by their recent successes. There was some varied shooting also to be had by those who had a taste for sport, and did not mind working a bit for it.

I call to mind an incident that occurred to me when out shooting, which, though a small matter in itself, was not without significance to me in my then position.

The commander of an irregular force must trust to the personal opinion in which he is held by those under his command, rather than to the written or printed form of words appointing him to hold office, and this personal opinion is not seldom an intangible feeling, based upon apparently frail foundations. Hence the value, such as it is, of the following incident.

I was strolling about the country, mounted, one day in company with one of my officers, both of us carrying rifles, when one of the many sorts of African antelope got up in front of my horse and commenced quietly cantering away. More in the spirit of sport than otherwise, I checked my horse, threw up my rifle, and fired a chance shot. Much to my own surprise as well as to that of my companion, and no doubt to that of the antelope, the latter fell, shot through the back. "Good shot, Major," said my companion. "A jolly fluke," said I; but my reputation as a sportsman and rifle-shot was established, and I was careful to maintain it by not doing much rifle-shooting in public after that day.

We also got up a very cheery, if amateurish, little steeple-chase meeting, which gave us a good deal of amusement.

We received the order to join the head-quarters at Helpmakaar with much satisfaction, as there was a fear that the native levies might not be included in the number of the troops destined to advance into

Zululand, and redeem the loss that our forces had hitherto sustained.

On arrival at Helpmakaar I reported myself to Lord Chelmsford, and was directed to join the 2nd Division under the command of Major-General E. Newdigate, an officer who had served in the Eastern campaign, and won the Cross of the Legion of Honour. I was very kindly received by him, and also by Colonel Marshall, who commanded the cavalry brigade to which I was attached, and to whom I owe my sincere thanks for the kindly reception accorded me, and for the generous recognition of the small services that my very irregular mounted contingent was able to render.

It was on the last day of May, 1879, that I was marching at the head of my battalion of natives towards the camp of the 2nd Division at Koppie Allein, on the banks of the Blood River, when I met an officer with sketching apparatus entirely unattended.

He told me his name, Lieutenant J. B. Carey, and that he was attached to the Quartermaster-General's Staff, and had been reconnoitring and sketching the country about the camp.

I asked him if he did not think it rather risky to go about sketching entirely by himself when it was known that Zulus were in the neighbourhood. He replied that he did not think that there was much danger, and that he was anxious to get the sketch ready for the Quartermaster-General on his arrival in camp. I could say no more.

The next morning, the 1st June, was the eventful day on which Prince Louis Napoleon so unfortunately met his death. The circumstances are too well known



now to require description, and my own personal knowledge of the details can add little of interest to the published facts. That Lieutenant Carey was wanting in personal courage I cannot believe. The brief interview that I had with him on the previous afternoon would rather leave the impression of a spirit of enterprise, and even of rashness, than of caution, and much less of cowardice. He bore a high character in his regiment, the 98th or Prince of Wales Regiment, and, as a friend of his who knew him well said to me, "he had made his peace with God."

Any attempt to saddle him with the unfortunate death of the young French prince would be unfair and futile. The little party was entirely under the command of the young prince, and though from the military standpoint scouts should have secured the safety of the kraal, yet the ordering of such a safeguard lay necessarily in the hands of the commander. I cannot but believe that if the young prince were alive to-day he would himself endorse this opinion.

The native guide that accompanied the party to the kraal and was killed there was a man of my battalion.

I went myself to the kraal the next day, and could not but be surprised that any body of soldiers should have neglected to send scouts out for protection against surprise, as the country at the back of the kraal was wooded, and mealie crops were growing close up to the kraal itself.

I brought away as a memento of the sad event a knobkerry stick, which I found in the kraal, and which now hangs in the hall of my house.

One of the first duties that we were called upon to perform after joining the 2nd Division was to accompany a party, under the orders of General Newdigate, to visit the field of Isandhlwana. The sight was a sadly interesting one. We were, I believe, the first to visit the camp since the fateful 22nd January. The dead lay as they had fallen, a thousand corpses, untouched or disfigured except for the wind and rain. A group here and there of men lying together where a last desperate stand had been made. It was a picture of the massacre of brave men painted in the colours of blood. The clothes had lasted better than the poor bodies they covered, and were indeed the only remnants of individuality. We gathered some sad relics of those who rested there—letters from home, photographs and blood-stained books.

The body of Colonel Durnsford was recognized, covered over with stones in a group of the Natal Carbineers, whom he had raised and organized. "Peace to his ashes," says Captain Gillmore, in his "Ride through Hostile Africa," "for a braver soldier never drew a sabre or bestrode a charger; and I have a right to know, as I was acquainted with him from childhood."

It was about this time that I remember seeing Lord William Beresford of the 9th Lancers, who had got leave for six months from India, and had come to Africa in the love of fighting and adventure, and with the resolution of qualifying for the Victoria Cross, ride into camp without his helmet and with blood spots on his uniform, having, together with

Sergeant O'Toole, Frontier Light Horse, rescued from the Zulus Sergeant FitzSimmons, Mounted Infantry, when reconnoitring towards Ulundi, on June 27, 1879.

He was warmly greeted and congratulated by his many friends, for his simple and kindly nature, together with his chivalrous and almost boyish love of adventure, endeared him to all who knew him.

During the advance of the 2nd Division under General Newdigate to Ulundi, the men of my battalion of Zulus were relegated to their proper sphere of duty, that of scouting and reconnaissance.

We were attached to General Marshall's cavalry brigade, and furnished picquets and sentries at night at a considerable distance from camp, in positions, indeed, that a British soldier could not be expected to hold. There was, however, always a difficulty about withdrawing them at night if an attack was threatened, as they could not then be well distinguished from the enemy. A provision of lanterns was suggested, but there were obvious objections to their general use.

The fear of a night attack was a constant source of uneasiness, and false alarms were not infrequent.

I recollect one evening walking over to General Sir Evelyn Wood's camp, a mile or two from where we lay. During a chat I remember that Sir Evelyn said to me, "Don't believe that your Zulus will fight. They are all right for scouting, but would run away if there was any fighting."

The experience of the next few days rather reminded me of those words.

After an excellent cup of cocoa, a favourite drink

of Sir Evelyn, I prepared to return to my camp. It was getting dark, and as I started we heard the report of a shot or two from the direction of the camp.

Sir Evelyn kindly offered me an escort, which I declined, knowing how readily false alarms occurred.

But as I approached the camp I heard the report of a field gun, which made me a little anxious, as our gunners were not much given to false alarms. However, as the firing soon ceased I pushed on into camp, and found that it was after all a false alarm; but one from which, as I discovered in the morning, some of my tents had suffered.

I imagine that, as we were now approaching Ulundi, where it was pretty well known the decisive battle of the war would probably be fought, the nerves of our native troops were a little strained; and indeed a somewhat lively demonstration of this happened a few days later.

It was, I think, the eve of the battle, and my men were as usual posted as picquet and sentries at some distance from our camp of the 2nd Division. I was lying dressed with the rest of my officers on the border of the camp, and was awakened about midnight by a succession of fiendish yells, followed by a trampling of many feet.

I tried to rise, but was knocked down by a rush of men. I felt sure that the Zulus had broken into the camp, and tried to clutch my revolver, which was by my side, but in vain. I remember expecting vaguely the thrust of an assegai in the small of my back, but nothing happened, and as I staggered to my feet, I heard the voice of one of my officers,

Captain Boord, "They are not worth a rap." "Who?" said I. "Our men, sir!" was the reply, and then the truth dawned on me. It was only another false alarm! The whole camp was, of course, disturbed, and we had no more sleep that night.

A detachment of young soldiers of the 24th Regiment, recently arrived from home, formed part of our camp that night, and my faithful servant "Guppy" was with them. I asked him how they behaved at the alarm. He said, "They just fell into their places in the camp, sir, as if they were in their barracks at home."

In a few days after this we reached the field of Ulundi.

The last act in the great drama of a campaign carried on for some seven months between a brave but uncivilized people and a trained and disciplined modern army, was now to be brought to a close.

The last scene was a fitting termination of this abnormal struggle.

A British force of about the strength of a division with three batteries of Royal Artillery and some Gatling guns was on July 4, 1879, drawn up in a hollow square on a bare plain without shelter-trench or other defence, and was attacked by twelve Zulu regiments of some 20,000, of whom not less than 1500 fell on the field.

The British loss on this day amounted to two officers killed and ten non-commissioned officers and men; the wounded were nineteen officers and sixty-nine non-commissioned men.

Had the Zulu fire been better directed our loss

must have been much heavier; but the bullets generally went high.

It was a strange and pathetic sight to see Mr. Coar, the army chaplain, standing at the head of a grave, quietly reading the burial service while the bullets whistled overhead.

The army surgeons and hospital men were busy attending to patients, with the red cross of St. George flying overhead.

A man fell in the ranks near where my battalion was standing, and one of our officers called to our surgeon, "There is some work for you;" but the surgeon, after looking at the man, turned and shook his head.

I had directed my mounted officers to dismount, and had done so myself. Standing by my horse I heard the thud of a bullet that had found a home, and I called out, "Who's that?" A young officer sitting mounted near me replied promptly, without too much regard to grammar, "Me, sir, shot in the leg!"

My own horse, beside which I was standing, received a bullet in the root of his tail, but under the circumstances I could hardly return myself as "horse shot under him."

The natives of my battalion may be excused for not showing a very brave front whilst under fire. They lay for the most part crouched on the ground with their skin shields over their heads; but even this did not preserve them from having one or two wounded.

Lord Chelmsford and Staff remained mounted

during the engagement; our General rode up and down behind the firing line, sitting bolt upright in the saddle and encouraging the men to "fire low and not too fast."

"The Zulus," says the Report of the Intelligence Department, "firing wildly, pressed forward in their usual loose order, and sought to close with the British troops; but the steady and well-sustained fire of the infantry, supported by the Gatlings and artillery, rendered this impossible, and at no point did they succeed in approaching nearer than thirty yards." They had shot their bolt, and the dense masses became rapidly disorganized under the storm of bullets and shells rained upon them, and then the wavering mob broke into headlong flight.

Lord Chelmsford seized the moment, and turning to General Drury Lowe said, "Go at them, Lowe." Our cavalry commander required no further orders, but leading his command out from an opening in the rear face of the rectangle, the words of command, "Form troops; form squadron—trot; form line—gallop—charge," followed quickly, and in a few minutes the Lancers were among the flying Zulu masses who, though crushed and stabbed by the lances, fought in stubborn knots, not crying for quarter, but stabbing at the horses as they went down and trying to drag the men from their saddles.

The Lancers were followed by a troop of the King's Dragoon Guards, and the mounted men of the Flying Column who pursued the broken remnants of the Zulu host that had fled towards the hills.

The order for the disbandment of the native levies followed in due course. It was with feelings of real regret that I parted with the officers and non-commissioned officers of my battalion.

With the exception of the single incident mentioned above on our first march out from Pietermaritzburg, no instance of indiscipline or neglect of duty occurred, and this is saying much, for the battalion was composed of very heterogeneous material. The commander did not know and was unknown to any individual under his command, and the officers, non-commissioned officers and men were similarly unknown to each other, and yet all worked for the general good.

My relationship with Homoi, the native chief of the tribe composing the battalion, was peculiar, and ended in a scene little short of a burlesque.

He would not admit that there was any one who could interfere with his personal service to me.

I assured him in vain that there was the Commander-in-Chief, whose orders all had to obey.

He, being still obdurate or unconvinced, I arranged a meeting for him with Sir Garnet Wolseley, who had lately come out from England to take command of all the Queen's soldiers in South Africa.

Homoi consented to this, and we met as arranged ; but Homoi was still obdurate.

We were under orders to march the next morning to a certain place there to be paid off and disbanded, and Kinsman, my interpreter, assured me that Homoi would certainly prevent this.

I said to him, " Could we not get hold of the old



chief and shut him up for a bit?" He replied that he could not answer for the result, but that he would try what could be done. Accordingly we took our revolvers in case of trouble, and went to the old chief's tent and took him quietly to the guard tent of the 24th Regiment, giving orders to keep him there until a certain hour the next day.

This was safely accomplished, and my connection with this fine old African chief was finally severed.

It happens that I write these words within a few days of the date when England has been called on to mourn the loss of the greatest of her soldier sons of this generation. One who rose by his merits as a soldier from the rank of ensign to that of commander-in-chief of the army.

Sir Garnet Wolseley was, at the time of which I am writing, of Ashanti fame, and known in the Service as a thoroughly progressive soldier with a future before him.

What that future has been is now a matter of history, for his name has been prominent as a fighter, an organizer, and reformer during the whole term of his service.

In addition to his signal qualifications as a soldier, Sir Garnet had given evidence of the possession of high administrative qualities, and had been selected by his sovereign to undertake the settlement of the recently acquired Empire in South Africa.

My first introduction to Sir Garnet, though not in itself possessing any features worth recording,

has impressed itself on my memory as characteristic of the man.

I was in charge of an isolated post after the battle of Ulundi, and had been directed to report myself to Sir Garnet, the Commander-in-Chief, at a certain place on a certain day and at a certain hour.

I must plead guilty to what, I suppose, I should call the dangerous habit of running appointments rather fine as to time. It is a habit that grows on one, and is responsible for sundry inconveniences, such as missing trains, coming late for dinner, or other social engagements. It gained for me, I believe, in former days, the time-honoured quip of the *late* Captain Bengough.

To be late for a soldier is, of course, a crime, but I have always held and taught that to be too early is for a commander of troops only something less than a crime, for the regulation "Stand at ease" position has little of ease about it.

On the occasion in question I had a long ride on an unknown road, and found myself a little pushed for time. On arrival at Sir Garnet's camp I found him sitting outside the tent looking, I thought, rather stern. I came forward, saluted and reported myself, "Major Bengough!" Sir Garnet said, "You are late, sir." I replied (I hope respectfully), "I think not, sir!" Sir Garnet turned to his aide-de-camp with, "At what hour was Major Bengough told to be here?" "At ten o'clock, sir," was the answer. "What o'clock is it now?" said Sir Garnet. "Five minutes to ten, sir," was the reply.

Sir Garnet's attitude towards me changed at once.

He asked for some information that I was able to give him, and desired me to accompany him on his way, visited my camp, and expressed himself well satisfied.

Since that day I have received from Sir Garnet much kindly support in some humble efforts that I have made to introduce a more practical system of training in tactics and rifle practice than that in vogue in the early post-Crimean days; and I have had the pleasure of receiving letters from him when Commander-in-Chief, from time to time, approving certain reforms that I had ventured to introduce.

Lord Wolseley was not only distinguished for his achievements in the field, but the soldier's inner and domestic life was dear to him. His character may well be summed up in the comprehensive phrases bestowed on him by Sir Wilfrid Laurier in the Canadian Parliament, as "a great soldier, an able general, a distinguished man of letters, and a perfect gentleman," and, if I might add another word to this just laudation, it would be, "and a good friend."

My recollections of the Zulu campaign close with an experience that I recount with some hesitation, as it hardly seems in keeping with the stern facts of war that I have attempted to describe in these pages. The incident is as follows :—

When I embarked for South Africa, I left my wife with a friend in Dublin. On the day after that in which disaster befell our arms at Isandhlwana, my wife said to her friend, "I saw in a dream last night a field with soldiers in red coats lying about wounded

and dead." It may be easy to explain these words as a fancy due to a state of mental anxiety, and if it stood alone I should leave it so ; but in this case, as it happens, a similar mental vision, though of a more prosaic nature, and hence perhaps less liable to be construed as a mental hallucination, occurred as follows.

I had written home to say by what steamer I should leave Durban, and had ridden on in advance of my luggage, and went on board the steamer with my light baggage. The steamer was timed to sail that evening, and my faithful servant with my heavy baggage not having appeared, I was obliged to leave the ship with my light baggage, with a view to coming home by the next steamer. I afterwards learnt that my wife said to her friend, "I saw Harcourt go on board a steamer yesterday, and then leave it. What can this mean?" Explanation followed when I arrived home.

I do not pretend to offer a solution of these immaterial communications, but now that we have become familiar with the manner in which we can converse, so to speak, with a friend in the Antipodes, by the help of a current of electricity, is it too much to believe that communication may be maintained by non-material means between friendly spirits at distant points on this planet?

The following kindly and over appreciative letter from General Newdigate, commanding the 2nd Division of the Field Force, to which my battalion of the Natal Native Contingent was attached, was received by me on my return home from South Africa.

"United Service Club,  
"Pall Mall, S.W.  
"November 22, 1879.

"MY DEAR BENGOUGH,

"I am glad to hear that you have returned safely home, and hope when you come to London that we may meet.

"I consider that you and your battalion took such an important part in the Zulu campaign that you will be glad to see the opinion of the Duke upon the 2nd Division.

"The following extract is from a letter to me from Sir Alfred Horsford:—

"‘H.R.H. has requested me to say that from the very beginning he appreciated the work done by the gallant men under you, and the very efficient manner in which you commanded the force entrusted to your care. I can assure you he has always spoken to me in the highest terms of services performed by your column.’

"I send this to show that although so little has been said in the papers of the 2nd Division, their work has not been overlooked at head-quarters.

"Believe me,  
"Yours sincerely  
"(Signed) EDW. NEWDIGATE."

I cannot but feel that the actual service rendered by myself and my battalion has been very kindly overrated by my General, but I can safely say that we were all anxious to do our best, if only for the sake of our able and kindly commander.

## CHAPTER X

1880-1885

### THE BURMAH CAMPAIGN

THE year 1880 saw me again on the way to India a brevet major in the regiment.

It was about this time that I made my first small venture in publishing from time to time certain vagrant contributions to our store of military literature. The first essay took the form of a "Military Catechism for Non-commissioned Officers and Soldiers," and was intended to supply the knowledge necessary to make an intelligent and efficient soldier by a system of questions and answers on such subjects as discipline, recruiting, discharge, rifle practice, etc. The little book was in the form of questions and answers, the answers being supported by a reference to the several books of regulations.

A copy of the book was submitted to the War Office, and was kindly received, and permission was accorded for its being published "with the approval of H.R.H. the Field Marshal Commanding-in-Chief;" but I was informed that it could not be made a book of regulation. The little book has not made for itself a very brilliant future, one principal reason for this

being, no doubt, that to be of much use it would require continual supervision and revision, and this I was not prepared to give it.

I had also made use of the interim of leisure on my return to England to gain some knowledge of the Russian language. Having no assistance beyond grammar and dictionary, I made slow progress, and at one time felt inclined to retire from the contest fairly beaten. But perseverance brought its own reward, and in my case of a practical character, for I obtained permission of the proprietors of the Russian military magazine (the *Voennoi Sbornik*) to translate from the magazine some interesting articles on mounted infantry, the importance of which additional arm to the recognized arms of the service the Russians were among the first to recognize.

Whether due to the publication of this little work, I know not; but I was very agreeably surprised to receive from Army head-quarters an invitation in the year 1881 to join the Intelligence Department at Simla as Russian interpreter, an invitation that I need hardly say I joyfully accepted.

The days passed in the office of this department under the direction of the Quartermaster-General in India, Major-General Sir Charles MacGregor, were among the red-letter days of my life. The work itself was simple, and consisted principally in making translations of military subjects occurring in the Russian Press; but the real interest was in feeling oneself in touch with the hub of the wheel driving the great military machine that controlled our Indian policy and possessions.

Sir Charles MacGregor was a personality that inspired those under his direction to give of their best. He had bestowed special attention himself on the problem of the North-West Frontier, and his book on the subject is an example of close reasoning and careful personal observation.

I was much pleased at receiving the following kindly appreciation of the slight service that I was able to render to the Department on the termination of my employment.

No. 204.

“Quartermaster-General's Department in India,  
“Intelligence Branch,  
“Army Head-quarters,  
“Simla.

“To Lieut.-Colonel H. M. Bengough,  
2nd Battn. Middlesex Regiment.

“February 7, 1882.

“SIR,

“I am directed by the Commander-in-Chief in India to express to you His Excellency's thanks for the gratuitous services rendered by you to the Intelligence Branch of the Quartermaster-General's Department; services which have been of great value to that office, and which His Excellency considers testify both to your zeal and ability.

“I am,

“Sir,

“Your most obedient servant,

“CHARLES MACGREGOR,

“Quartermaster-General in India.”

The next Staff appointment that I filled in India was that of Assistant Adjutant-General at Bangalore,



under the command of Major-General Rowlands, C.B., V.C., an officer who had received the Victoria Cross for valour in the trenches before Sebastopol. A fine soldier, and an excellent commander, who though reared in the ante-Crimean school of arms, was prepared to accept the war training of the modern school. The station itself, Bangalore, commands the province of Mysore from a military point of view, and the elevation of the district above sea-level gives it an equably temperate climate, and one eminently fitted for the residence of Europeans.

The period of my staff duty in this command was, however, clouded by an event that happily is of exceptionally rare occurrence in the British Army, the military execution of a soldier for a capital crime.

The execution was carried into effect in accordance with the regulations on the case, and I can safely say that I trust that I may never be called on to be a witness of another such a drama.

In all other respects my service at Bangalore, though not very progressive from a military standpoint, was socially a very pleasant one.

I shared a comfortable bungalow with two comrades, Colonel Gunning, our chief commissariat officer, and Major Hughes Hallett, the Deputy Advocate-General, both boon companions, but I can recall no incident during my time in this popular station specially worthy of record.

We had a beautiful parade ground, good enough for lawn tennis anywhere, and I possessed a pattern sergeant-major whom I could rely on for taking up points to a hair's breadth, and who managed my

official correspondence by a system by which a letter not replied to in three days' time was followed automatically by a "reminder," "by order"—much to the dismay of the regimental adjutants, who did not know how it was done.

The appointment that was now bestowed on me was that of Assistant-Adjutant and Quartermaster-General of the Hyderabad Subsidiary Force, with head-quarters at Secunderabad, under the command of General Sir Charles Keyes, K.C.B.

Sir Charles Keyes was a distinguished soldier, who had fought with great personal gallantry in the frontier wars and the Indian Mutiny. He was of a very engaging personality, and as a General content to be assured of orders being carried out without interference in petty details.

Sir Charles did not profess to be a student of modern military tactics, so that our parades were generally of the old type of "Right wheel into line!"

It was at about this time that the Indian Government decided on sending a force to Burma, where the political situation clearly demanded a change of government.

The force selected for this duty was detailed in General Orders, Simla, October 30, 1885, as under:—

A Naval Brigade from H.M.'s ships on the station.

1 Field Battery (officers, non-commissioned officers, and gunners only).

2 Garrison Batteries.

1 Mountain Battery, British (with mules).

2 Mountain Batteries, Native (with coolie equipment).

3 Regiments of British Infantry.

7 Regiments of Native Infantry (including one of Pioneers).

6 Companies of Sappers and Miners.

The force as above detailed was placed under the command of Major-General H. N. D. Prendergast, C.B., V.C., R.E.

General Prendergast was at the time serving on the head-quarter staff of the Madras command, and his personal knowledge of me must have been very slight. His selection of myself as his chief staff officer was, therefore, an entirely unexpected compliment, and one that I very sincerely appreciated.

I went at once to head-quarters at Madras to assist in making arrangements for an early movement; and I would here gladly avail myself of the opportunity of acknowledging the debt that I owe to the cordial assistance of the officers detailed as my Deputy Assistant-Adjutant and Quartermaster-Generals. Of these, Major W. P. Symons, South Wales Borderers, was an old comrade and fellow-sportsman, and one who as soldier and sportsman I have never met the equal. He was the first man who gave his life in the subsequent Boer War, leading his brigade mounted on the fateful field of Talana Hill, on October 11, 1899. He and his brother were winners of the Kadar Cup, the blue ribbon of the jungle, and the latter could pick up the spoor of a "pig" on a bit of hard, dry ground as well as a native shikari.

The circumstances under which General Symons gave his life in the fearless leading of his command at Talana Hill are worthy of record. The following

account is taken from the Regimental Records of the 24th South Wales Borderers, the regiment which he had formerly commanded :—

“At the outbreak of the South African War on October 11, 1899, Major-General Sir W. Penn Symons, K.C.B., was in command of the advanced post of the British forces, some four thousand strong, in Northern Natal, situated at Glencoe, five miles from Dundee and forty from Ladysmith.

“On October 20 the Boers, under Lucas Meyer, had occupied Talana Hill, some three miles from the British camp.

“General Symons at once attacked and drove the Boers from the Hill, he himself being mortally wounded during the engagement. General Symons was left in Hospital at Dundee.

“When the British force retired on October 23 to Ladysmith, he received every attention at the hands of the Boers, but died two days afterwards.

“General Symons was specially promoted immediately after the action of Talana Hill.”

There can be little doubt that General Symons practically sacrificed his life to his chivalrous belief in personal leading, for he was, in all probability, the only mounted officer in the attacking column.

To return to the Burmese Expedition. His Burmese Majesty had published a “Royal Order,” a copy of which is given below, but there were no signs of “the dawn of the auspicious day when he was to march forth with his auspicious and victorious army.”

## "ROYAL ORDER.

"His most Great and Glorious Majesty (titles) orders as follows :—

"The religion of Our most excellent Lord Jina—who received this name from his having been victorious over the five Máras—does auspiciously and truly shine and flourish in Sunaparanta and Tambadipa, the centres of the great Burmese Empire, to a degree far greater than in all the countries of China, Japan, Laos, Siam, etc.

"We your most excellent King, the establisher of religion and of Kingdoms and States, do most carefully observe all the duties incumbent on Kings and most faithfully endeavour to preserve undefiled the religion, to maintain the peace and happiness of the inhabitants of Our Empire, and to promote the advancement of the country.

"The English heretics, attempting to bring about the decay of our religion and the degradation of Our country, have violated the Treaty of Amity entered into with Our Royal Father, have made improper demands, and have unlawfully made demonstrations of war, in consequence of all of which the business of foreign and native merchants and traders and Our subjects generally have been injured and brought to a stand-still.

"To protect the religion, to protect the people's prosperity, to protect the Kingdom—these are the duties of Kings. Should the heretic English *kalas*, therefore, come to molest Our Kingdom in the least,

we shall march forth in person with Our Generals, Captains, and Lieutenants, with an array of infantry, artillery, elephanterie, and cavalry—the four component parts of an army, with Our land and water forces, and will seize the three divisions of the Talaing Kingdom Ramañña with Arakan, Tavoy, and (the) other provinces. Let arrangements be ordered and an auspicious day selected accordingly for Us to march forth with Our auspicious and victorious army.”

The fact is that our movements were altogether too rapid for the tactics of the Royal Army, and, with the exception of the fight at Minhla, the war dwindled down to the occupation of Mandalay and the subsequent desultory field movements for the suppression of dacoity.

At our first halt on the Irawadi River the Naval Brigade, under Captain R. Woodward, R.N., successfully cut out a Burman war steamer.

The objective of the expedition was the occupation of Mandalay, and this was promptly accomplished; though the suppression of dacoity in the district was not effected without a wide dispersion of the troops, and some local fighting, for a Burman is individually *chez-lui*, a brave fighting man.

There are two interesting events that I recall in my recollection of those days. The one is the visit that General Prendergast paid to Bhamo, the Burmese town on the frontier of China, and over two hundred miles by river north-east of Mandalay. It was an important caravan centre between China and Burma, and marks the limit of navigation on the

Irawadi. Our reception was friendly, but the temperament of the people in the adjoining hill country was doubtful.

I conducted a small party for a march through the hilly country towards China without incident, though my interpreter cautioned me that there might be trouble on our return journey, which, as we had taken purposely no armed escort, might have been awkward. Nothing, however, occurred.

I had, by the help of an officer of the force, whose name I unfortunately cannot recall, compiled a "Military Handbook of the Burmese Language," which is now before me, but which I have not been able to have printed.

The language, like the Burman people, is of the Mongolian or Tartar family ; but the character in use is of Pahli origin, being similar to the Telugu or Telingi, and was introduced into Burma by the Telaings or Telugu emigrants at a very remote period.

I had not attained myself to much proficiency in the language, but I remember that by it and a considerable mixture of Hindustani I managed to meet a Buddhist priest in a game of chess as played in Burma ; but as the pieces and the moves had only a distant relationship to Staunton's chess, the game may have been considered as drawn.

There is one more incident in this campaign that I have not recorded, but which I have not forgotten, nor am I likely to forget.

Some time after the surrender of the King, it was thought best that the Queen should also be removed

from the royal palace. This delicate duty devolved on my shoulders.

Her Majesty, in accordance with the national custom, had never left the palace, her seraglio, and strongly objected to do so at the dictation of the English heretics. However, through the help of our able and diplomatic Mr. Sladen, interpreter, Her Majesty was induced to see matters in their true light, and with the offer of my arm she left the royal palace, and I personally and respectfully handed her over to the charge of a subaltern of the 23rd Fusiliers, who was waiting at the palace gate with a bullock-cart for her conveyance to the steamer prepared for her. Her Majesty's future no longer forms a subject for history.

After three months' leave to England I returned to India and resumed my duties as Assistant Adjutant-General of the Hyderabad Subsidiary Force under my old commander, Sir Harry Prendergast.

The duties were not very hard, and we found time for the usual sporting and social amusements.

I call to mind a very amusing Menagerie Race, for which animals of all kinds were allowed to enter. As the entries, which included a varied assortment of animals, wild and tame, were being marshalled at the starting-point, a lady came up to me in a state of some trepidation, exclaiming, "Oh, Colonel Bengough, have you seen my Tommy? Captain ——'s leopard is loose!" I consoled her by saying that I knew the leopard personally to be quite quiet.

I am not quite sure in my mind what animal was



declared the winner, but rather think it lay between a water-buffalo and a donkey.

The Nizam of Hyderabad lived in some little state in the palace at Hyderabad, and had adopted to some extent European customs and manners. On the occasion of a visit by some exalted civilian, His Highness invited a number of the civil and military dignitaries of the station to a grand out-of-door feast, at which a pie-dish was introduced, from which when opened, out flew a number of small birds.

The Nizam was very accessible to Europeans, and took part in our sports and amusements. He was the possessor of a European butler or *chef-de-cuisine*, of whom the story was told that on the occasion of an officer calling to see His Highness on some official matter, he was kept waiting; the butler when he appeared excused himself for the delay by saying that "he was with the other nobles playing badminton with His Highness!"

As Sir Harry Prendergast was now in command of the station and district, I need not say that the practical training of the troops for war was not forgotten.

On my leaving the command, the following very kindly farewell was published in Divisional Orders:—

By MAJOR-GEN. H. PRENDERGAST, V.C., C.B.,  
Comg. H. S. F.

Secunderabad, 26th February, 1885.

On the occasion of Colonel Bengough's leaving Secunderabad, the Major-General has much pleasure in thanking him for his duties on the staff.

It is believed that every officer in the station has been struck by the energy, talent, good sense, and courtesy of the Asst. Adjutant-General, and will join in regretting his departure, and bidding him heartily farewell.

(By order)      H. DALE, Major,  
Asst. Adjt.-Gen. H. S. Force.

## CHAPTER XI

### IN COMMAND OF THE NAGPORE DISTRICT

IN November, 1886, I received my appointment as Brigadier-General to command the Nagpore district with head-quarters at Kamptee. This was the fulfilment of my ambition as a soldier—an independent command, with nothing and nobody to check my military vagaries (as, no doubt, they were considered by some of the old school of soldiers), except the head-quarters of the Army at Bombay, where, indeed, I could rely on finding a willing support of what might be called a modernized system of military training. The old familiar features of the “March past” and “Right wheel into line!” were exchanged for some simple movements in the attack formation, or, oftener still, for an elementary practice in the attack and defence of a position in the country.

Rifle practice at a butt in the rifle range was supplanted, or perhaps I should say supplemented, by field firing at a selected position in the country. As the Kamptee garrison comprised the three arms, it was possible to approximate to a certain degree of verisimilitude in these exercises. Night marches and night attacks and the defence of positions were carried out in as practical a manner as means permitted.

The garrison consisted of a regiment of Madras cavalry, a field battery Royal Artillery, and the Middlesex Regiment—strange to say, the regiment in which I had passed my novitiate in soldiering,—and a regiment of Madras infantry.

The station itself was a model of an Indian cantonment, in its appearance and sanitary arrangement and its social organization, all of which was due to the energetic and tasteful and tactful supervision of our Cantonment magistrate, Colonel Miller, of the Madras Staff Corps.

Personally the place has a certain specially fragrant memory to me, as it was here that my dear wife joined me for her first experience of India.

Previous to the time of her arrival, I had received as a companion in the house a young Russian, Mr. Criouliansky by name, the son of a prominent timber merchant at Odessa, who had visited India to see the country, study our system of government, and take photographs. The only condition that I made to receive him was that he should never speak to me in English.

He was a very pleasant, intelligent, and cheery young man, and we soon became good friends, and this latter in spite of a certain revelation on his part that certainly startled me for the moment, but which in no way affected our friendly companionship.

We were sitting at lunch, my friend having just made for me an excellent Russian salad, when he happened to make a reference to Nihilism. I said, half in jest, "But you are not a Nihilist?" He replied quietly, "Yes, General, I am a Nihilist."

"But you surely don't mean," I continued, "that you approve of murdering your Emperor?" "Yes, General," he said quite quietly. "But," I continued, "if you as a people do not approve of your Emperor, why do you not do as we did—rise together as a people against his rule and depose him?" He said, rather gravely, "General, there is not such a thing as public opinion in Russia. The people are too down-trodden to rise themselves, and so it is left to us who know and who suffer to act for them." The subject dropped and was not renewed.

My Russian friend, though not himself a sportsman, was keen about sport, and always readily accompanied me on my shooting expeditions. The district was excellent for sport, especially for tigers and wild pig, and a tent club for riding the latter was soon formed, and well supported by the young officers of the regiments in the station.

I retain a very pleasant memory of some happy hours, engaged in this prince of sports. A tent or two pitched in a shady spot near the covers to be beaten the next morning. And then the next morning, with its fragrant cup of tea (the "chota haziri" or "little breakfast"), the horses and ponies, almost as keen for the day's sport as the riders. But who shall describe the quiet excitement with which we take our several posts under the master's orders, whilst the beaters, with discordant yells, enter the jungle, and the riders grip their spears, waiting the master's word "Ride!" The country is not Leicester-shire or Warwickshire, and there are no bull fences to be negotiated, but there are nullahs wide and deep,

unseen until you are on them, or I might say in them, but which the boar takes it might be said in his stride. But the pace is telling on him, and Savile is already racing for the first spear with a young cavalry subaltern close by. But the boar is not to be taken without a fight, and turns savagely on his nearest pursuer, and then many things may happen which a more skilful pen than mine might recount.

But enough perhaps has been said to show that "pig-sticking" is a sport that requires a good horse and a good man upon him.

Attempts have from time to time been made to compare the sporting qualities of fox-hunting and pig-sticking; but is this not rather as if to compare the rival attractions of a glass of old port and one of sparkling champagne? The best man in Leicestershire would probably take a lot of beating in the Terai.

Our tent club at Kamptee contained a book in which was entered an account of every meet of the club for many a year. It is there recorded that a certain veterinary surgeon when charging a boar was thrown from his saddle and alighted on the boar's back, and actually rode his astonished mount for a considerable distance.

AIR :—" *My Love is like a red, red rose.*"

### THE BOAR.

#### 1.

The Boar, the mighty Boar's my theme,  
 Whate'er the wise may say,  
 My morning thought, my midnight dream,  
 My hope throughout the day.

Youth's daring courage, manhood's fire,  
 Strong hand and eagle eye  
 Must he acquire who would aspire  
 To see the wild Boar die.

CHORUS.

Then pledge the Boar, the mighty Boar,  
 Fill high the cup with me—  
 Here's luck to all who fear no fall,  
 And the next Grey Boar we see.

2.

We envy not the rich their wealth,  
 Nor kings their proud career;  
 The saddle is our throne of health,  
 The sceptre is our spear.  
 We rival, too, the warrior's claim  
 Deep stamped in purple gore,  
 For the jungle's side is our field of fame,  
 And our foe the mighty Boar.

CHORUS.

3.

When age hath weakened manhood's power,  
 And every nerve embraced,  
 These scenes of yore shall still be ours,  
 On memories' tablets traced.  
 And with the friends whom death hath spared,  
 When youth's wild course has run,  
 We'll tell of the dangers we have shared,  
 And the tushes we have won.

CHORUS.

M. Criouliansky, though without much experience of sport, was always glad to accompany me on my hunting expeditions, one of which was nigh to a tragic ending.

It was during the monsoon, when, as in all tropical areas, rivers and streams are subject to very rapid increase of flow. I was riding my grey Arab, and my companion was mounted on a waler. We had crossed a stream in the early day without

difficulty, which on our return in the afternoon had grown into a small but rapid flowing little river; and the passage had been made more difficult by *débris* of timber and vegetable matter carried by the current. I, however, foresaw no great risk in attempting the passage, and my little horse met the stream stoutly until about three-quarters of the crossing was accomplished. Then he was suddenly carried off his legs by a rush of the stream, and I found myself swimming in a strong current of water.

However, I struck out strongly for the nearest bank, which I gained. It was a steep, perpendicular bank, with grass growing on the top, and I seized a bunch of the grass with the intention of pulling myself up by it; but the grass broke in my grasp, and some heavy pieces of floating timber drove me into mid-stream again.

All this time M. Crioulinsky was galloping backwards and forwards on the near bank, calling out directions to me in all the languages that he knew. It was clear, however, that he could do little to help me. I managed, I hardly know how, to gain this bank, and again clutched a little clump of grass on the water's edge. Would it hold me until help should come was what was passing through my mind for those few seconds. Yes, the grass held stoutly, and I was soon relieved from my critical position. The little Arab had found a landing-place also, and so all was well; but it was only afterwards that I recognized that it was solely on the holding power of that handful of grass that my life in all human probability



depended, for though a fair swimmer, I could not have successfully continued to battle with the strong stream of water that was pouring down and carrying with it heavy pieces of timber and other *débris*.

Two other incidents connected with the above accident are, perhaps, worth recording.

On finding myself once again on terra firma I found that a diamond ring, a bequest from a brother officer, that I wore always on my little finger was missing; and that my watch had stopped at the exact time of my being washed off my horse into the stream.

My young Russian friend, M. Criouliansky, was anxious to see some typical Indian sport, such as tiger shooting, so I asked him to join me in a trip that I proposed to make into the jungle in the hot weather of 1887.

I had a very good shikari, but tigers are not always to be found when wanted, any more than milder kinds of game.

We had done a good deal of marching about under an Indian sun at its hottest without firing a shot, and I remember that I was lying on my charpai (bed) in my little tent after a long morning's trudge, when the shikari put his head in at the tent door and said that a tiger had been marked down in a bit of jungle not far away, and that he was a bad character, and would the sirkar come and shoot him.

I confess to some reluctance to turning out of the comparative shelter from the heat that my little tent afforded, to shoot a probably imaginary tiger; however *l'esprit de chasse oblige*, and we started, myself my Russian, my gun-bearer and a local guide.

We went a mile or so from camp along the border of the hill and jungle when our guide stopped, and pointing up the head of a ravine, whispered "Sher!"

I took the rifle and walked up to where the shikari was, and looked carefully up the ravine, but could distinguish nothing. But presently a hoarse sort of cough caught my ear coming up the ravine, and then guided by this I distinguished the head of a tiger resting on its forepaws, and I could see how it occasionally raised its head to make this sort of snort of anger or defiance.

I was puzzled how to take action. If I fired, the tiger might charge at once, in which case I did not know if my second gun-bearer would stand by me, or he might creep up the ravine with a view to escape or to attack under its shelter. However, I knelt down and took a steady shot at its head lying between its paws.

The shot was answered by an angry growl, and the tiger jumped up, and I was rather relieved to find it made its way limping along the far side of the ravine, offering me a shot as it passed the corner and disappeared.

I loaded, and followed it up with the shikari, and found it lying round the corner of the ravine mortally wounded. My first shot had struck the fore paw on which its head was resting.

My Russian friend and companion on seeing the result of the day's work exclaimed, "Ah, General, Eto nastoyashia okhota!" (This is real sport!)

We were fortunate in having as chaplain in the station, the Rev. J. O'Farrell Willcocks, a padre not

only exemplary in the performance of his clerical duties, but also a sportsman and a popular personality in the station.

He was indeed something of a hero, for on hearing that the driver of our post cart had been attacked on more than one occasion by a tiger, he volunteered to try and shoot the marauder. He accordingly dressed a dummy figure to represent the native driver, and concealed himself in the cart. As he expected the tiger sprung on the dummy, and our good pastor's rifle disposed of him.

His sporting relaxations, however, sometimes placed him in an awkward situation; as, for instance, when one day having wounded a wild buffalo, a notably revengeful and savage enemy when wounded, he was treed for the greater part of the day, having dropped his rifle, and, what was of almost equal importance under an Indian sun, his *solah topie* (sun hat).

Kamptee was, in those days at any rate, an eminently sociable little station. There was a cricket ground and golf links, a racquet-court, and a club reading-room where badminton was played, and where the local gossip, not scandal, was interchanged, or, at least, interchangeable.

I attempted the experiment of afternoons *à la Française*, when French only was to be spoken; but these did not meet with any very great success. A difficulty, for instance, was found in scoring in the game of badminton, when it came to "Deuce all," "Tous les diables!" seemed rather a mouthful for our good padre.

I may relate here a rather curious incident that happened on the forenoon of one of our garden parties.

I was sitting writing in my office-room when my little Russian friend, M. Criouliansky, appeared at the door in a decidedly excited condition, and said, in his rather broken English, "General ! there is one vild pig out in de roads, and all ze peoples is afraid."

"Nonsense, my friend," I said, "there are no wild pigs on this side of the river."

"Oh, but yes," he replied, "it is so ; come and see !"

So to humour him, and seeing that he was so evidently in earnest, I got up from my desk, took from a corner two hog-spears that we used in our tent club, and giving one to M. Criouliansky, we went out. Of the two hog-spears one was a long spear as used in the North-West for riding a pig, as one uses a lance in tent-pegging, and the other and shorter spear was of the Bengal pattern used for "jobbing" or striking down at a pig, as practised by the Calcutta Tent Club. I took the latter, giving the longer spear to my friend.

As we came out of the house I heard a great noise of shouting and halloaing in Indian fashion, and saw a motley crowd of natives dancing and gesticulating, and in front of them a fine young wild pig, trotting along in the usual defiant manner of its kind.

As it reached my garden fence it turned, took the five-foot hedge in a bound, and trotted calmly through the garden, turning, and taking up a position among my cabbages.

I advanced upon the intruder with spear lowered at the "charge," but when within some half-dozen paces the boar charged gallantly straight at me, receiving the spear point just over the left eye, but getting home slightly on my left thigh.

Our little Russian friend considered that it was now his turn to attack the enemy, and was advancing boldly, when the boar charged again, and my friend, getting a little mixed up with his long spear, failed to stop the attack, and was promptly bowled over, the boar passing over him, and this time taking up a position under cover of the far side of a tool house.

On my approach he charged out again, thus presenting a flank to my attack and enabling me to deliver a thrust at his side, which bowled him over, and he was soon despatched.

He was a fine young boar, standing about thirty-two inches; but his tusks were only beginning to develop, or our conquest would not have been so easy. The wound I received on my left thigh was trifling, and my spear point had glanced off the bone just over the boar's left eye, so that if it had been half an inch lower it would probably have proved fatal.

In proof of the muscular power of the animal I may mention that I found the muscles were so firmly developed that the boar, when placed on its four legs on the ground could stand quite firmly without further support.

As it happened that this little fight took place on the morning of one of our social afternoons, I placed

the young boar, standing, under a tree on the lawn, much to the astonishment, and a little, I fear, to the disquietude, of our lady guests.

I had the boar's head stuffed and mounted, and it now hangs over my dining-room door, and shows quite plainly the scar of my spear point, an eighth of an inch above the left eye ; that amount lower would have spoilt this little story.

As I seem to have embarked on the dangerous ocean of telling shikar stories, let me recount a rather curious experience that does not occur every day, even to shikar story-tellers.

On this occasion I was on a shooting trip in the Central (Indian) Provinces. Accompanied by a shikari, I was strolling through the jungle on the look-out for anything that might offer itself in the way of sport, when we saw a large black object slowly descending the slope of a hill opposite us.

This we soon determined, with the help of glasses, to be an unusually fine bear. I accordingly ran on ahead, and following the signalled directions of my shikari, took up a position at a spot that he pointed out as being a likely one for the animal to pass.

Sure enough, in a little while, Bruin obligingly appeared, unconcernedly making its way up the hill directly in front of me. I then saw that its apparently unusual size was due to a fine young cub that it was carrying on its back. I waited till it was within twenty yards, and then gave it my first barrel. Whereupon the mother bear, evidently imagining that the sting of the shot was due to her offspring clawing her, turned on it with her teeth, and a very

exciting scuffle took place between mother and child. I watched this family squabble for some time with much amusement, and then, thinking it time to put an end to the domestic drama, I fired my second barrel into the mass of rolling, black fur. This time the mother bear, wheeling suddenly round, discovered the real enemy, and shaking herself free of her spluttering cub, came for me open-mouthed. It was only then that I realized I had been so intent on watching the interesting and novel scene that I had omitted to reload my first barrel !

I put out my hand for my other rifle, expecting to find my shikari just behind me, but discovered that he had bolted. As the angry bear was by this time quite close to me, and I was without means of defence, there was nothing for it but to follow his (the shikari's) example. This I did, and remembering the advice of sporting books to dodge round a tree when charged by a wild beast, I slipped behind a handy trunk. In so doing, however, my foot caught in a root, and I fell sprawling, flat on my face.

Naturally, I quite expected to feel the brute's claws in my back, followed by other equally unpleasant consequences. But nothing happened. When, an instant later, I twisted round and looked up, I saw Bruin had neglected her opportunity, and was clambering slowly and painfully back up the hill. Quickly I scrambled to my feet, and, having reloaded my rifle, I followed her up and easily finished her off, for she was sick and weak from her wounds. I found out afterwards that her cave was situated up the hill, a short distance from the top, and this fact, coupled

with the pain from her hurts, probably decided her not to follow up her attack, thereby in all likelihood saving my life, or at all events sparing me a severe mauling.

Later on I tried to find the cub, but in vain.

I cannot quit Kamptee without a word of kindly memory for our old friend Shaikh Abdul Ghafoor, the bazaar master, who, under the direction of Colonel Miller, the Cantonment magistrate, kept the bazaar, and the station generally in such admirable order; and who, as I have stated in the earlier pages of this history, was the last person to see us off from Bombay some three years later, having travelled there expressly for this purpose.

But let it not be thought that sport and pastime were the characteristic features of our life at Kamptee. We did some honest good work in war training, though not quite of the "Right wheel into line" pattern.

The troops stationed at Kamptee at this time, 1886-87, were as under :—

4th Prince of Wales Own Light Cavalry.

1st Brigade Royal Artillery.

Duke of Cambridge's Own Middlesex Regiment.

A good deal of attention was paid to night work by the cavalry and infantry; hitherto the troops had not been much practised in this direction of military training. The native troops obtained considerable proficiency in these practices, and it was remarkable how the native cavalry would manœuvre over broken ground at night without accidents.

My attention had been drawn to the necessity of



practice in night work by articles in the Russian military magazines, in which it was pointed out that the range of accuracy of modern firearms will make attack movements of troops by day very hazardous, if not impossible.

It was from the same source, viz. the *Voennoi Sbornik*, the Russian military magazine, that I learnt of the experiments that the Russian Army was making in long distance cavalry rides, though as it seemed to me the one important factor in these rather spectacular competitions ignored one all-important feature, viz. the condition of the horses for effective cavalry action at the end of the test.

It occurred to me then to devise a test scheme that would represent in some measure the powers of endurance and efficiency for attack or defence of a detachment of cavalry and artillery, marching in a hostile neighbourhood.

In order to obtain some little verisimilitude to real operations, I wrote to the officer commanding at Jubbulpore, stating my proposed invasion of his command, and asking him to make some show of defence, as my special object was to show that the flying detachment sent was fit for a fight after the march.

This was kindly done, and our cavalry was able to trace a few scattered scouts, and the guns to come into action in support, on the enemy's reserves.

"Scarletts,  
 "Colchester,  
 "November 30, 1886.

"MY DEAR BENGOUGH,

"I have delayed too long to thank you for the very interesting pamphlets. I've utilized both. I started 'night attacks' at Aldershot, and all stations were sent my scheme, which invited attention to your translation, and were ordered to follow suit.

"Now I've had a distance ride, last week. 1 Officer, 1 Non.-Com. Officer, 4 privates, 1 spare horse, 13th Hussars, prepared by 12 days' increasing work, equipped as if to ride across an enemy's country, rode last week to Norwich and back, 137½ miles. They started at 2.15 p.m. on Wednesday, rode to Ipswich, 20 miles, then to Norwich next day about 50. Then to Ipswich, then in here early on Saturday. No sore backs, horses quite fresh. I thank you for the hint. The men took much interest in the work. The party left at 9 a.m., and reached their halt for the night, on the 50 mile days, about 7.30 p.m., halting twice during the day for 1½ hours, and for half an hour. One unprepared four-year-old did as well or better than the others.

"Yours very sincerely,  
 "EVELYN WOOD."

I was now preparing for and looking forward to the pleasure of receiving my wife and our little ones at our Indian home. The house was prettily situated on the banks of the Nerbudda River, with a nice little lawn and badminton court, and a good flower and

vegetable garden, with excellent mango trees, producing a liberal supply of that deservingly famous fruit.

The hot weather had nearly passed away, for Kamptee could be hot enough at times and seasons. I well remember on a hot evening when going to bed finding my pillow so heated that I had to sprinkle it with water before attempting to go to sleep.

My wife was accompanied by our faithful English nurse, and I had supplied an admirable specimen of the Madrassee "boy" as man servant. There was also a little pet dog called "Puffy," and an ill-tempered monkey in the veranda.

To our great distress, and that, indeed, of the whole household, "Puffy" fell ill and died. He had become a great favourite with all the servants, and we were surprised after his death to see a procession of the servants headed by the "boy" who carried the poor little dog's coffin, solemnly marching through the garden to the burial ground by the river. It was all the more remarkable as dogs are unclean animals to the ordinary Mohammedan and Hindoo.

The ill-tempered monkey was a contrast to one that I had previously possessed, and which was the mother of a tiny offspring, which she kept under strict maternal control, boxing its ears when naughty, in quite a motherly fashion.

I had a bit of bad luck in my stable at this time. Before coming to Kamptee I had bought from an officer, a friend of mine, a very good-looking Arab horse, and on my asking that it might be sent to me, I learned that it had been attacked by fever and was

unable to be moved. It continued under veterinary care for some months, being fed on beef tea, with no grain or hay. When sent to me I was warned to continue the same treatment, and only give it gentle exercise. This I was careful to do ; but one day on my giving it a quiet canter on some grass on the side of the road, the horse suddenly collapsed, throwing me on to the road. Some soldiers being near, saw me fall and ran up with "It's the Ginerall!" and began trying to lift me up. I was winded by the fall, and could only stammer out, "For goodness' sake leave me alone." It was a case of "Save me from my friends!" The horse never recovered.

It was about this time that the Commander-in-Chief of the Presidency, His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught, visited Kamptee on inspection duty. His Royal Highness, with his usual thoroughness, saw all that we had to show him, including a little night manœuvring, and was, I believe, well satisfied.

His Royal Highness's Staff dined with us, rather to the bewilderment of our Madrassee boy, who through an excess of professional zeal when handing round the champagne in magnum bottles, which he evidently imagined to be a peculiar sort of wine, amused us all by announcing it as "Magnum, sir!"

He further distinguished himself by converting into a mustard pot a coffee cup of rather special quality, and so presenting it to our guests, to ensure that it should come under their notice, in which he fully succeeded, much to our amusement and his own satisfaction.

Before I left Kamptee we had established the war game with some success, and our efforts in this direction were stimulated by the following kindly appreciative letter from Lord Wolseley, then Commander-in-Chief.

" War Office,  
" *October 15, 1888.*

" DEAR BRIGADIER—

" Many thanks for the papers which I received with your note. I am very glad that you have taken up this war-game question.

" It is only when general officers evince a real and active interest in professional matters—apart from ordinary drill and parade work—that sound military knowledge can be ensured.

" I am rejoiced to find what an interest you take in the instruction of your officers, and all who wish to see our army well trained owe you a deep debt of gratitude.

" Very truly yours,  
(Signed) " WOLSELEY.

" Brigadier-General Bengough, C.B.,  
" Kamptee."

## CHAPTER XII

### SECUNDERABAD AND BANGALORE

It was in 1888 that I was offered the officiating command of the Hyderabad Subsidiary Force at Secunderabad, an offer that I gladly accepted, for although I felt a keen regret in leaving Kamptee, with its many attractions for sport and sociability, as well as for soldiering, yet I could not but embrace readily the opportunities that a larger garrison and a wider field of exercise offered for military training.

I was besides well acquainted with the special facilities for practical training in the field that the country around Secunderabad presented, having served there on the staff only a few years previously.

The garrison at Secunderabad at this time was as under :—

14th King's Hussars.

3rd Light Cavalry.

A Battery Royal Artillery.

2nd Battalion Middlesex Regiment.

2nd Battalion Hampshire Regiment.

Four regiments Native Infantry.

It would not be possible, after the lapse of so many years, to recall the various forms in which it was sought to prepare the soldier in peace time for his duties in time of war.

It may suffice to say that the principle observed throughout was to approximate in all details as closely as possible to the conditions of modern warfare.

Socially, Secunderabad offered the usual attractions of an Indian station. With two cavalry regiments in the garrison, paper chases naturally formed a prominent part, and we enjoyed many a varied scamper across country with a finish not too far from some hospitable mess.

I was fond, as I have said, of tandem driving, and I remember finding myself one day when driving with my wife in a rather curious entangle; my leader, of a pair of ponies, having shied round and got his bit jammed over my lamp, so that we could not move backwards or forwards until the captive was released from his self-made bondage.

My wife had a special little pet in the person of a tiny hog deer (*cervus porcinus*), about twelve inches high. It met with an untimely death, being stung by a scorpion when lying under a chiffonier in the drawing-room.

Snakes of all kinds were occasionally to be met with, but seldom caused any fatality. I was riding one morning early with Colonel Norie, Assistant Quartermaster-General, when we noticed a cobra in front of our horses, that stood up in its usual hostile attitude as we approached. Colonel Norie stopped his horse, dismounted, threw the reins to me, and walking up to the snake struck it across the back with his light riding switch, killing it.

We had a good garden at Secunderabad, in which my wife and I greatly delighted. It was our ambition

to rear some strawberry plants, in which we succeeded, but when we came to gather the fruit we found that birds and slugs and various other creeping things had been before us, and no nets or ordinary expedient would protect our fruit. But India is the place for devices, and we accordingly had a number of little cups or boxes made in the native bazaar of tin of a size to hold an ordinary strawberry, and in this way we were successful in placing a dish of Indian-grown strawberries on our five o'clock tea table.

I cannot omit to recount a simple incident, simple in itself, but indicative, I think, of the friendly relationship that should exist, and indeed did exist, I believe, universally in the command, between regiments and commander. I had received an invitation from the officers of the 3rd Light Cavalry to dinner; but, unfortunately, arriving rather late, I mistook the mess-house of the 14th Hussars for that of the 3rd Cavalry. On entering the mess-house I was told that the officers had gone into the mess-room to dinner. I accordingly entered the mess-room and took my place in a vacant chair by the President, apologizing for my late arrival. My appearance seemed to create no surprise, and it was only after some time that I suspected something was wrong, and said to the President, "Is not this the mess of the 3rd Cavalry?" to which he replied with a smile, "No, General, this is the 14th Hussars." I explained and apologized for my mistake, and would have gone over to my proper hosts, but was persuaded to remain and finish my dinner with my self-appointed hosts. I made my early apologies to my friends of the



Madras Cavalry, which were quite understood, and most kindly received.

On January 9, 1889, I returned to the Madras Presidency, having been appointed to the command of the Bangalore Division. This was indeed putting the crown on my good fortune, for besides its social and climatic advantages, Bangalore comprises a strong garrison of the three arms and special facilities for military movements in the vicinity of the station. The country was also familiar to me, having served in the command as Assistant Adjutant-General. I was fortunate in securing as my Assistant Adjutant-General, Captain Henry Finn, who had been adjutant of 21st Hussars, and was as good a man in the office as he was in the field, and a good horseman withal.

We were not long in getting to work in the field, and as a specimen of the quality of the work, I may describe a practical bit of field-firing that I call to mind.

A defensive position was taken up on some hills seven or eight miles from Bangalore by a dummy enemy represented by trenches occupied by chatties (earthenware pots), logs of wood, etc.

A force of the three arms with a detachment of the medical staff was detailed to search for, and under a "SPECIAL IDEA," to discover the enemy, and if considered feasible to attack, ball cartridge being employed.

And here let me describe a simple but effective way in which casualties can be represented with either ball or blank ammunition.

Supposing it is desired that the casualties should

represent one-tenth of a given force, then when serving out the ammunition a certain number of men representing the fraction desired would be served out with a less number of rounds with instructions to fall out as casualties when their rounds were exhausted, each such casualty being provided with a ticket to be shown to the medical officer in charge stating the nature of the supposed wound. The casualty would then be treated by the medical officer, or taken to the rear, as may be ordered.

After the attack had progressed to a certain point, the chief umpire (in this case myself) decided that it had failed, and the troops were withdrawn and bivouacked out of range, and sentries and patrols were mounted for protection.

The ball ammunition was now withdrawn from all the troops and exchanged for blank, and a skeleton force was sent to occupy the position. The attack was then renewed by night or early morning under the eye of the chief umpire, who would afterwards criticize the proceedings, and a brief account would appear in District Orders.

I do not pretend that the above is an actual report of an exercise carried out, but it may serve as a sketch of what such an exercise might, I think, well be.

We were fortunate in having at Bangalore at this time the 21st Hussars which, under the command of Colonel Hickman, presented a good example of what cavalry could do. On one occasion, when inspecting the regiment in a field where some practice jumps had been made, I asked the Colonel if a squadron

led by its officers could be taken over the jumps and then draw swords, wheel to the right, and charge. He said, "Certainly, sir, though we have never practised such a movement." The manœuvre was safely and smartly accomplished.

It will be remembered how the 21st Hussars (since 21st Lancers) distinguished themselves at Khartoum a short ten years after the above date, winning three crosses of valour for the regiment, as under. Private Thomas Byrne, 21st Lancers, though himself severely wounded, went to the assistance of Lieutenant the Hon. R. F. Molyneux, Royal Horse Guards, who was wounded, dismounted, disarmed, and was being attacked by several Dervishes. Private Byrne attacked these Dervishes, received a second severe wound, and by his gallant conduct enabled Lieutenant Molyneux to escape.

Lieutenant the Honourable R. H. L. J. de Montmorency on September 2, 1898, after the charge of the 21st Lancers, returned to assist Second-Lieutenant R. G. Grenfell, who was lying surrounded by a large body of Dervishes. Lieutenant de Montmorency drove the Dervishes off, and finding Lieutenant Grenfell dead, put the body on his horse, which then broke away. Captain Kenna and Corporal Swarbrick (who received the Distinguished Service Medal) then came to his assistance and enabled him to rejoin the regiment.

Captain Paul Aloysina Kenna, 21st Lancers, at Khartoum on September 2, 1898, assisted Major Crole Wyndham, of the same regiment, by taking him on his horse (Major Wyndham's horse having been killed

in the charge), thus enabling him to reach a place of safety, and afterwards Captain Kenna returned to assist Lieutenant de Montmorency, who was endeavouring to recover the body of Second-Lieutenant R. G. Grenfell.

I recall an incident that occurred during my command at Bangalore that serves to show how soldier-like qualities will assert themselves in individuals in times of peace.

Without any previous intimation, I sent one day the following order to the officer commanding 21st Hussars—

“A state of war with a foreign army is supposed to exist in the Mysore territory. It is important to open communication with His Highness the Maharajah of Mysore at once. Please detail an escort of such strength as you think desirable, under an experienced officer, to convey the accompanying letter to His Highness, and to return with answer as expeditiously as possible.

“Please report hour of escort starting.

“By order,

“Etc., etc., etc.,

“Etc., etc.”

The officer selected for this duty by Colonel Hickman was Lieutenant P. A. Kenna, now Colonel P. A. Kenna, V.C., D.S.O., A.D.C. The distance, as the crow flies, from Bangalore to Mysore, is roughly one hundred miles. I cannot state exactly at what hour the escort started, but I remember that the next evening a dance was given at the mess of the 21st, and early in the dance Lieutenant Kenna reported

himself to the Colonel as having fulfilled his mission without accident.

I had brought down from Ootocamund, or familiarly "Ooty," the pet hill station for the Madras Presidency, a couple or two of foxhounds, who used to accompany me generally on my early morning ride in the hope of picking up the scent of a jackal, but generally with little success. The "Ooty" pack, however, used to show some good sport. The country, though without Leicestershire fences, was steep and tricky to those who did not know their way about. The best way of descending some of the steep inclines may not be obvious to a foreigner, who may be inclined to try the expedient of a pedestrian mountaineer, and attempt to descend by a zigzag. This manœuvre would probably end by a nasty fall of the horse sideways, and a possibly sprained fetlock joint. But it is astonishing what a steep angle a horse can safely compass, and indeed at a considerable speed, if ridden straight down a steep slope.

The low ground is even more tricky than the slopes, as I had the misfortune to experience, for one day the hounds were running fast, and I saw in front of me at the bottom of a slope what looked like a very jumpable ditch, but which the field in front of me all seemed disinclined to negotiate.

I was riding my little Irish horse "Paddy," and thought that, with his experience of his country's boggy bits, I might safely venture; but the Nilgiri swamps were not to be despised, and I found myself stranded on the opposite bank with a bit of pain in my right shoulder.

Another horseman following my evil example was standing by me in much the same plight.

However, we mounted and joined the field, and were in at the death of the jackal.

As my shoulder was now giving me some pain, I appealed to an officer of the medical staff who was present, and he, after examination, informed me that the shoulder-blade was dislocated, and that I ought to go home as soon as possible, and he moreover kindly provided me with a "doolie" and transport bearers. I have a very distinct, though not very joyous, memory of that ride, as the almost continuous jogging on the mountain road was not a comfortable sensation for a man with an injured limb.

Paper-chases made an important item in our lighter hours of amusement, and I found my little Irish "Paddy" as handy at our artificial fences as he was with the real obstacles in his own country. The ladies in the station shared our sport, and rather more, I think, than held their own. One rather interesting course finished near our house, in which the first horse in received a prize which the rider had to present to the first lady in, though as a matter of fact the ladies were seldom much behind the men.

I remember on another occasion a trooper of 21st Hussars had a fall at the last fence at the finish, and was still on the ground as my wife came up and rode for the fence. It was too late to stop her, or to get the fallen man and horse out of the way, so we could but give her a holloa to put on the pace, which she did, and her little horse gallantly cleared the fence and the horse and man together.

Bangalore, unlike most Indian cities, had a considerable sick and indigent population, both Eurasian and Indian, and it was the custom of my wife to take them some food weekly under arrangements made by Mr. Hill, the Cantonment magistrate, and it was a pleasure to me to accompany her on these occasions.

It also fell to my duty to undertake the Church Service for the troops in the morning when our chaplain was absent in the district. It was a duty which I endeavoured to fulfil to the best of my ability, and was indeed pleased to hear incidentally the opinion of a lady in the garrison: "I like the General's Church Services; he always gives us such a good sermon!" I need not say that the sermons were not mine, but were those of that interesting and instructive writer, the Rev. Charles Kingsley.

As an illustration of the lighter phases of an Indian social life, I recall a certain fancy dress ball given by the garrison of Bangalore, and which was attended by His Highness the Maharajah of Mysore, who was always ready to identify himself with Western ways of social amusement.

Such a ball, being something of a novelty, naturally created considerable interest, more especially perhaps among the ladies. I ventured myself on introducing something of a novelty of a rather startling character. I undertook the representation of the Veiled Prophet of Khorassan, and, to play my part as realistically as possible, I wrote to one of our famous fancy dress designers at home to make for me a mask of as startlingly horrible design as possible.

In due course the mask arrived, and I could well congratulate the designers on evolving as successful a representation of the horrible as it is well possible to imagine.

It was a grinning skull, so ghastly in design that our children fled from the sight of it, panic-stricken. But I had yet to find a lady brave enough to undertake the part of the fair but unfortunate Zelica, but this also I was happily able to do.

It was arranged that the scene of the disclosure of the Veiled Prophet should take place in that figure of the Lancers where the lady and gentleman advance and bow to each other. It was then that he (or rather I) "raised his (my) veil, the maid turned slowly round, looked at him, shrieked, and sank upon the ground."

All this was excellently carried out by my partner amid smothered screams of "Oh!" from the ladies. I noticed in the next figure, in which hands are exchanged by all going round in a circle, that the hand of the now unveiled Prophet of Khorassan was rejected by most of the ladies. So I made my escape promptly from the ballroom, returning in the more appropriate full dress evening costume of the Handley Cross Hunt.

The time for our departure from India was drawing near, and we (for I am allowed to speak for my wife as for myself) were, indeed, sorry to leave so many good friends and so pleasant a station.

As a farewell token of friendship my wife was presented on leaving with a handsome silver service, including a heavy silver tray, with the border



embossed with solid silver representations of Hindoo mythology and with the following inscription :—

Presented to  
MRS. BENGOUGH  
(Our Coat-of-arms)  
BY THE OFFICERS OF THE  
BANGALORE GARRISON  
As a Token of Esteem. 1891.

I have still to record the breaking of a last link with the many pleasant memories of my Indian service in parting with my well loved little charger and sporting companion “Paddy,” who joined my service fourteen years earlier.

He stumbled one day and came down when cantering on the general parade ground, and I recognized sadly that his work was done and his course run; and on leaving the country I entrusted him to a friend, who kindly offered to take care of him in his old age.

Before leaving India I had the good fortune to secure three interesting shikar trophies in an unusually fortunate manner.

The Political Agent resident at Mysore at that time was Sir Oliver St. John, himself a good sportsman. It was reported to him that an elephant in the district had become “must” (dangerous), and was doing some damage in the neighbourhood. Sir Oliver kindly invited me to come down and assist in destroying it, to which I willingly consented.

I came down accordingly, bringing a heavy rifle

in addition to my usual shikar weapon, and joined Sir Oliver's camp, where I heard many tales of the ravages that this elephant had made in the neighbourhood.

I had taken the precaution to make myself acquainted with the weak spots in an elephant's harness, such as they are, by the study of a skull, but they are not easily identified in the living specimen, especially if the specimen is angry.

The next morning, as Sir Oliver was occupied, I took the rifles and strolled out with a native gun-carrier through the forest. I had not gone far before I moved a doe sambar which passed my path, affording a fair shot; but its sex secured it from a rifle shot. Soon after, a boa-constrictor, or more properly, I believe, I should write python, appeared; but this also was allowed to pass.

And now my forbearance was about to be rewarded, for I could hear the sound of some large animal moving in the jungle right in front of me, while the boy with me said, in an excited whisper, "Hathi, sahib" ("The elephant, sir"), and at once I could see an elephant strolling quietly through the jungle about eighty yards or so from where I stood, on the opposite side of a nullah, and quietly cropping the leaves or branches of the trees over his head as he strolled placidly along.

Sportsmen tell you that you should not fire at an elephant at beyond some forty yards, as a shot if not fatal is useless. I was somewhat further than that at the time, but if I had attempted to cross the nullah I should have been seen and should probably not have got a shot at all, so I dropped quickly on my

knee and took as steady an aim as I could at just behind the ear.

The shot was followed by the sound of a rush and something falling, and my gun-bearer cried out excitedly, "Hathi gir para" ("The elephant is down").

I was not long in crossing the nullah, and found the elephant lying on the ground with a four-ounce bullet in its brain.

I felt really ashamed of myself for having thus, as it were, treacherously, though really quite accidentally, deprived my friend and host of his chance of bagging an elephant. But fate ordained that in a somewhat similar manner I should unwittingly again trespass on a friend's sporting rights.

I had joined the camp of my old friend and comrade Joe Curteis, 16th Regiment, who had pitched his tent in the Mysore forests with a view to shooting a bison. We had a friendly discussion one day after dinner as to the best way of getting a shot at a bison when viewed or marked down.

To those who have not much acquaintance with these splendid representatives of the bovine race, I would say that these wild cattle, though far exceeding in size a Hereford bull, will gallop like an antelope down the steepest hill in a dense jungle.

The usual procedure, when the sportsman entrusts himself to the skill of a native shikari, is to follow the bison when disturbed, by tracking, in which the Indian is very expert, and in the hope of getting a chance shot. But the bison have a very keen scent, and if the wind favours them they will not wait to be shot at.

On this occasion, then, having moved a fine bull, and finding that it had our wind, I rather astonished my shikari by checking him in his intention of taking up the trail as usual, and by signifying to him to fetch a compass and get to leeward of our game. However, he very intelligently took up the idea, and after a bit of a trudge we viewed the bull lying on a hillock well to windward of us. A careful stalk followed and the bison bull was mine.

The third piece of good luck was as follows:—I had put up at a dâk bungalow in the same district, and after arriving there one evening after a blank day—the last day of my outing—I was told that a tiger had killed a calf in the jungle not far from the bungalow, and had been hunted away, but the calf was still there.

I went to the spot and had a small machan made in a tree commanding the “kill,” and returned to the place in the evening with my shikari.

The night was rather dark, and having done a good bit of marching I was sleepy and dozed off, but was awakened by a touch from the shikari and the words “Sher, sahib.” I could hear a munching of bones at the spot where the calf was but could not distinguish the form of any animal, but aiming as near as I could by the sound, I fired a shot, which was responded to by a grunt or growl and a dash into the jungle.

I imagined that the *séance* for the night was at an end and composed myself again for slumber, but was shortly again aroused by my shikari with the same words. This time I decided not to lose a chance

and fired both barrels of the rifle at once. The result was something between a groan and a growl, followed by a gurgling sound that told that my shots had taken effect. I did not, however, care to descend until dawn, when we found that the marauder was a fine leopard, whose skin is now in this house—a memorial of the last shot that I fired in India.

## CHAPTER XIII

### JAMAICA AND ALDERSHOT

ON my return to England, in 1892, I was appointed to the command of the camp at Strensall, but little in the way of soldiering was to be got out of this duty. Indeed, I might say that the only redeeming point in the time I spent here was that I made the acquaintance of Captain Godfrey, Yorkshire Regiment, doing duty as adjutant of the camp depôt, who even then was noticeable as a keen, active, sensible young soldier, and whom I thought myself fortunate in securing later as my aide-de-camp. He was one of the best men on a horse that I have known.

After my retirement he went on a shooting excursion to Africa, and unfortunately was killed by a lion. I greatly lament his loss.

In 1893 I was sent as Colonel on the Staff, with the rank of Major-General, to Jamaica, where my command consisted of a British infantry regiment and the West Indian Regiment, and some garrison artillery. On the departure of Sir Henry Blake, the Governor, on furlough to England, I filled for a short time the place of Acting-Governor, and had the honour of celebrating Her Majesty's birthday by the customary dinner and ball at Government House,

which, under the skilful and experienced management of Captain Chevalier Kitchener, 46th Regiment—my aide-de-camp—and through his diplomatic regard for local social claims, was, I understand, considered quite a success.

The pleasurable duty also fell to my lot of commuting, under the advice of the Advocate-General, a capital sentence in the case of one who mortally wounded a man against whom he had no previous grudge, by firing a revolver at him across the table after, I think, a race meeting.

I remember also that some of the West India Regiment gave occasional trouble by assaulting the police, and by extemporizing a rather formidable weapon by fixing a razor to the barrel of a rifle. I had to address the regiment on parade in my best Hindustani, and warn them of the danger of insubordination and violence. I sent the regiment into camp for a week or so, and the trouble died out.

Our island was visited about this time by a lady authoress, Miss May Crommelin, who wrote the very interesting book of travels, "Over the Andes," and I was very glad to offer her such hospitality as I could during her stay in Jamaica.

A rather curious incident occurred during her stay at Trafalgar, as my house was called.

We had retired to rest for the night when I heard a voice at my bedroom door, saying in a tone of some excitement, "General, there is some animal in my bed!" I hastened to the room, and could hear distinctly a loud clucking noise under the bed-clothes, and on further examination I found a large

specimen of the "violet sand crab" (*Gecarcinus ruricola*), a species, I believe, almost confined to the West Indies. They are said to live in communities, and to form burrows in the ground often two or three miles from the sea. These crabs are provided with powerful pincer claws which, when attacked, they fix upon the enemy, with the power of detaching these claws at will. They travel by night, directed by a powerful instinct which causes them to march straight to their destination, surmounting all obstacles in their way. The obstacle in this case appears to have been my fair guest's sleeping chamber, but what its destination was has not been disclosed.

The above is the only record of the appearance in a house of a specimen of this uncanny crustacean that I know of.

I could write many pages of the attractions of this interesting and beautiful island, of the extensive sugar factories, and the many pleasant social functions, but will content myself with a brief example of the danger of interfering with the laws of nature.

Some years ago the rats in the island became a perfect plague in the sugar plantations, and the experiment was tried of importing a number of mongoose from India. This was done, and the rats were demolished; but the mongoose, having destroyed the rats, proceeded to take the birds also, or to diminish them to such an extent that insects became, and still are in many parts of the country, a veritable pest.

The natural beauties of the island are very striking; flowers and fruit that require in England



hot-house or protected cultivation are to be found growing wild in the hills or vales. Many of the flowers are very beautiful, as the aloe, the datura, the cactus, and the mountain pride (*Victoria regia*), and innumerable varieties of ferns.

There are many sorts of fireflies and of lantern beetles, which quite illuminate the mountain paths at night, rendering a lantern superfluous. There are no venomous snakes, but plenty of harmless ones and lizards.

The public gardens at Kingston are well laid out and well kept, and worthily represent the bounteous hand of nature on this happy island. I must confess, however, that my heart was still responding to the call of the soldier's life, and it was with real joy that I learned of my appointment to the command of an infantry brigade at Aldershot.

This proved to be the last stage of my military career, and though it was, in a sense, the consummation of my ambitions, yet it contained incidents that cast a shadow on the closing scenes of my soldier life.

Before leaving Jamaica I had the joy of inviting all the school children of Kingston to a tea and games in the grounds of Government House. In this I had the willing help of so many that I hesitate to mention names. My good aide-de-camp was foremost in making the necessary arrangements for tents, tables and chairs, etc., and I remember how the Omnibus Company kindly undertook the carriage of the children to and fro, free of expense.

It was, of course, a fine day (for one can rely on

a fine day in Jamaica), and all went merry as a wedding bell.

There was quite a little community of Americans in Kingston at the time of which I am writing, and I need hardly add that they were pleasant and welcome visitors.

Before leaving the island I paid a short visit to New York, and I remember that one of our passengers was an American gentleman who had been paying a visit to Jamaica, and whose acquaintance I had made, though I cannot at this moment recall his name.

He had a fund of good stories with which he would regale us on board, and though many a good story will not stand the test of print, I will venture to recall two of those which I happen to remember best, and which seem to me worth preserving.

In the American War of 1863, General Grant, who had won so many and so important victories for the Federals' cause had, like many, or perhaps one should say most, successful Generals, a certain number of censorious critics, and it is related that some of these asked President Lincoln for an audience to report to him on a certain important matter connected with the Commander-in-Chief of the Federal armies.

Their request was granted. "Well, gentlemen," said the American President on their entrance, "what is this on which you wish to speak to me about General Grant?"

"Well, sir," said the spokesman, "we are sorry to tell you what we think you ought to know, that General Grant is in the habit of drinking spirits to a

considerable extent, and indeed that he has been known to go into action, well, not quite sober."

"Indeed," said the President, "is it so? And can you tell me, gentlemen, what it is that General Grant drinks?"

"Oh no, sir, we have not of course made any close inquiry into such a matter, but we have reason to believe that General Grant drinks whisky."

"Really, gentlemen; and could you not tell me the brand of the whisky that General Grant drinks?"

"No, sir; indeed, we have not inquired into such details."

"That is very unfortunate, gentlemen, for if I knew the brand of the whisky that General Grant drinks, I would send a dozen of it to each of my Generals! Good morning, gentlemen."

The other story runs thus:—

A certain artillery officer had invented an arrangement by which the gun of a mountain battery might be loaded and fired from the back of a mule without being dismounted, and he sought permission to show the arrangement to the General and Staff of the command.

Accordingly the mule and gun and mounting arrangement paraded and a target was placed at a convenient distance, the General and Staff taking up a position in rear.

The gun was loaded quite peacefully on the mule's back and was laid carefully on the target. The fuze was then ignited, but did not at once ignite the charge, and the mule, hearing the spluttering behind, began to turn round, to the consternation of the

General and Staff, until the gun pointing fairly on them they fell flat on the ground, the charge passing harmlessly over their heads.

This was the last known attempt to carry out mounted mountain-battery shell practice.

I need not add with what sorrow I heard of the terrible fire that occurred in Kingston some years after I left, causing me the loss of more than one personal friend, and involving in destruction so much of that fine capital city.

On my arrival in England I found myself gazetted to the command of the 2nd Infantry Brigade at Aldershot, and I lost little time in joining my command. I found myself provided with an excellent brigade staff, and with the fine force of the three arms forming the Aldershot Division I looked forward with keen anticipation to some specially practical field exercises.

The regiments of my own brigade included an exceptionally smart and efficient battalion, one of the rifle brigade. It was a battalion that when it had received an order in the field could be trusted to carry it out in the best way possible, a comfortable assurance to a brigade commander.

During the period of my brigade command at Aldershot I endeavoured to make our brigade exercises as practical as possible without undue fatigue to the men, though it is possible that occasionally in an attempt to realize a tactical problem considerations of distance and time were given a second place. But, putting such thoughts aside, it soon became clear to me that I had ceased to be a *persona grata* to my military superiors, in that I had become a suspect as

one of that fraternity, unloved by military authorities, "a fellow that writes to the papers."

Let me plead guilty to such an impeachment, but let me add that I have never written a line of criticism on the action of any of my superior officers, and much less should I have done so in the case of His Royal Highness then commanding the Aldershot Division, whom I admire as a soldier, respect as my prince, and from his continued kindness to me and mine I might almost venture to add, regard as a friend.

Indeed, it so happens that on noticing an article in a service paper deprecatory of His Royal Highness' work in the early days of his command of the Aldershot Division, I wrote a letter anonymously, stating how much good work, in my opinion, had been carried out in the division since His Royal Highness assumed command.

But I have lighter and pleasanter recollections of Aldershot days and field days than the above. Sir William Butler was brother brigadier when I joined the command, and I remember the Duke saying pleasantly to me at the time of reporting myself to him, that our field day "pow wows" were often enlivened by a sparkle of Butler's wit.

It was not long before I had an example of this.

Our brigades had been opposed to one another on a field day, and General Butler had taken up a position on a hill. The Duke said to him, "What would you have done if General Bengough had attacked you on the hill?" "I should have fixed bayonets, sir, and driven him down the hill!" The Adjutant-General smiled and whispered to the Duke,

who said, "But we don't fix bayonets in field manoeuvres!" "Metaphorically speaking, your Royal Highness," was Butler's prompt reply, much to everybody's amusement.

The dreary old "Long Valley" has some gay little stories of its own. I remember being present on one occasion when His Royal Highness, the Duke of Cambridge, was dressing down some field officers for slack work, and said to them, "Why, you are like a pack of old women, gentlemen." Colonel Oakes, of the 12th Lancers, who was present, and a great friend of the Duke, said, "But, sir, do you include me in the 'pack of old women'?" "No, no, Oakes, of course I don't mean you," said the Duke. "Then, sir," replied Colonel Oakes, "if you did not include me you should have said, 'You are like a pack of old women, except Colonel Oakes.'"

I was fortunately able in the year 1894 to join the artillery camp at Okehampton, where I found much of interest and instruction in the lectures and field practices.

It was, however, the tactical side rather than the mechanical or technical that specially attracted me.

I held, I fear, certain unorthodox ideas of the tactical use of artillery, and as these could not well be submitted for discussion in class I ventured to put my views on paper, illustrated by sketches, and suggesting certain problems of the employment of guns in action which I was kindly permitted to hang up in the camp mess hut and over which we could fight in peace.

I had for many years been a devotee of chess, and

used to carry a small board about with me in my pocket, and when alone in the Himalayas I would sit down, open my board and study an opening. I found no chess club at Aldershot and endeavoured to introduce one there, but the only name that I could get of any one willing to join was that of our Roman Catholic priest.

My love of the game was, however, the cause on one occasion of my getting into a little trouble. I was engaged in a War Game at the Pavilion when Sir William Butler was chief umpire. I had given directions to my general officers as to what they were to do, and I then began a game of chess with Colonel Talbot, commanding the Cavalry Brigade. Indeed, I considered that I should not be "playing the game" by further interference with my officers. But Sir William heard of the above and was not pleased, and on summing up remarked rather caustically, that "even Napoleon could not do two things at the same time." I remember that I lost that game of chess.

Since leaving the service I have retained my love of the game and belong to several chess clubs, going so far as to win the Silver Queen, 3rd class of the B.C.C.A. (British Correspondence Chess Association), of which I have the honour to be President.

Before closing my reminiscences of Aldershot, which have been, as I have said, not unclouded with gloom, let me recall two little touches of a lighter and brighter character than those here recorded.

And first let me pay without fear of sycophancy a humble tribute to the princely qualities, for I can

describe them no better, of the Royal Duke who commanded the Aldershot Division.

It has been ruled that no higher title can be applied to a royal forerunner of the Duke of Connaught than that he was a "perfect gentleman." No less a title can be claimed for the Royal Commander of the Aldershot Division. Let me express the universal concurrence with this claim by the troops of the division in the words of a British subaltern. "I would rather be wigged by His Royal Highness than praised by any other commander."

One more light touch and I close my memories, grave and gay, of the great army training ground.

It was the Queen's birthday and the troops were assembling on the general parade. As I rode on to the ground with my brigade I found Sir William Butler mounted at the head of his brigade already formed, and after mutual salutation I said, "I hope that it is going to be a fine day, and I think so for I have great faith in the young woman of the *Graphic*."

"I have no faith in any young woman!" responded Sir William at the top of his voice, so that the whole of the brigade heard it and tittered audibly.

My retirement from the Service under the age clause took place a little before the Boer War of 1899.

Had I been selected for a command in this campaign, I might have added something practical to my professional experience and have possibly gained some distinction; or I might have joined the company of good men who lost life and reputation in a war where



military skill seemed to count for little and the primitive features of battle were the prevailing factors in success.

During the war I contributed to the *Broad Arrow* a series of articles weekly on the military situation, which were, I believe, kindly received by the profession and by the public.

I was pleased one day when entering the United Service Institution to deliver a lecture on some military subject, to be accosted by a young officer with, "I like your letters, Colonel, in the *Broad Arrow*, and especially because you sign your name to them!"

A lighter way of retaining my interest in military matters was the invention, if I may so describe it, of a war game which I called "Bellax," and which promised at one time to have a future before it, for it seemed to possess certain qualities that would make it a rival of that prince of games, chess.

The idea of "Bellax" originated in my seeing our youngest son one day playing with counters in a fashion that seemed convertible into a military game.

The principle of the game is that the pieces represent to some extent the relative fighting value of the three arms, and that success is obtained by manœuvring the pieces so as to be superior on a given line of attack, as described in the copy of rules appended.

A further peculiarity of the game, and one that, I think, adds to its resemblance to military movements, is that the pieces can be disposed at the commencement of a game in whatever formation, or

portion of the board within certain limits, that each player may desire.

The game had a successful *début*, and was even described to me by an enthusiastic admirer as being “better than chess!”

That it has good points to recommend it to the public estimation is certainly probable, as such experienced caterers for social amusements as Messrs. Ayres & Co. have taken it up, but have not as yet obtained for it any great success in public estimation. But this may come.

This memoir, or rather perhaps these memories of the work and play of a soldier's life, would be still incomplete without some reference to the more serious aspect of life known as religion.

I think that the modern characteristic of seeking to understand what one is taught to believe, rather than the acceptance of a hereditary creed, has been a prominent feature in our family, resulting in a wide variation in our religious aspect.

Thus, my dear mother and elder sister, finding the Church of England doctrine unsatisfying, and the practice cold and unsympathetic, drifted into the Roman communion.

My father was a reserved but staunch Protestant, and presided over family prayers daily, morning and evening.

My eldest brother, George, gave up his life entirely to the redemption of convicted boys, and with a neighbour—Mr. Barwick Baker—founded, I believe, the first reformatory for boys, over which he personally presided; and, as I remember, caused our father

some anxiety by bringing home for change of air and scene two boys convicted of theft and believed to be converted.

The caution to the butler to keep an eye on the silver was happily not necessary.

My younger brother Stewart was, from his early days, something of a marvel in music. He played the organ at ten years old. He went to Oriel, our family college, and became a Bachelor of Music in 1872, having composed an anthem and passed the examination in the theory of music.

He took Holy Orders and was Rector of Hemingby from 1876 to 1904, where he was greatly supported in the parish duties by our good sister Isabel, who died at Hemingby.

Individually I adopted a negative attitude on religious questions, with a hesitation to accept as belief what I could not understand.

I always, however, retained the wish to believe, if only for the dear mother's sake, and under this influence I read greedily all that I could find on both sides of the doctrine, with the result of being gradually convinced that no creed, no system of ethics, could offer the promise of so much peace and happiness in this world with the prospect of a still happier future after death, as does the Christian religion.

My father, as a young man, had practised as a barrister, and I remember his saying one day to my mother, "My dear, it has been a principal part in my professional life, to study the weighing of evidence, and I am clearly of opinion that there is a

strong balance of evidence in favour of the truth of Christianity."

I have always myself appreciated the weight of the testimony of that great master of logic, Archbishop Whately, where he shows, in his "Historic Doubts," that there is more reliable evidence of the existence on earth of Jesus Christ than of that of Napoleon Buonaparte.

It is, however, difficult to explain how many men, young men especially, who call themselves Christians, are ashamed of making an open profession of their faith.

How few men, for instance, at school or college, or in the army or navy, will have the courage when sleeping together to kneel down and say their prayers.

I have noticed this on active service with men who were certainly professedly Christians, and who very probably said their prayers regularly when by themselves.

It would seem as if they feared that their action might be construed into timidity or dread of death.

I remember on one occasion in Fort Bengough, when an attack by the Zulus seemed probable, that as I went round the defences I noticed one of my young officers on his knees. I remarked to my adjutant that the time and place seemed unusual and somewhat inappropriate; and he replied, "Yes, sir, but he is with his men."

I have sometimes been asked, as have, no doubt, other old soldiers, if I have ever felt afraid. The answer would be, I think, nearly always in the

negative. Most soldiers and sailors, and indeed most men, have at times been in a position to look death in the face and have not felt fear.

There is generally not sufficient time to think about death, to have fear of it. Fear comes, when it does come, from the recognition of the possibility of a sudden death rather than in the realization of the possibility.

Many a man will lead a forlorn hope without a quiver, who would be in a nervous tremble awaiting his turn to bat at a cricket match, or to start in a steeple-chase.

An officer of high rank, one of the most distinguished for courage in the Service, and who had won the soldiers' badge of courage, told me that before starting for a run with the Staff College "Drag" he was obliged, to use his own words, "to hold his jaw with his right hand to prevent his teeth from chattering!"

Moral courage and physical fear are often curiously intermingled. There is the story of the young officer lying by the side of an old sergeant under a heavy fire, who noticed signs of uneasiness in the non-commissioned officer, and said to him, "Are you afraid, sergeant?" "Afraid, sir," said the sergeant, more bluntly perhaps than deferentially: "if you were half as much afraid as I am you would have run away long ago!"

I have some reason to believe that I have been liked by the men under my command, and this notwithstanding long marches and often rough work.

This knowledge has come to me in more than one way, and has indeed been rather a matter of surprise ; but on reflection I remember that we all, as a rule, like those who like us, and I can honestly say that I loved my soldiers, and love begets love.

May I, as a very old soldier, offer a bit of advice to my young comrades, of what may appear a small matter in their relationship to their men ?

It is the small things, the trivial acts, the kindly manner, that makes an officer popular with his men. Let me give an instance or two. Be careful to return all salutes, not by raising a forefinger as if hailing a taxi-cab, but by a soldierly touch of the cap or helmet.

Or again, when visiting the men's dinners as orderly officer, don't be content with putting your head into the barrack-room as the orderly sergeant calls the men to attention, and saying "Any complaints?" but walk in, look at the men's dinners with a kindly "Dinners all right, men?" or some similar phrase, and perhaps adding a word of praise on the state of the barrack-room.

In bringing to a close these memories of a soldier's life, it occurs to me that those who may have accompanied me so far on my path in life may care to know how I pass the evening of my days.

The description will not be a lengthy one.

I am in the fortunate possession of a happy home, and the enjoyment of good health for one who has outrun the limit for an old-age pension. This latter I attribute mainly to two sources: the convenient distance of something under a mile to our parish

church with its regular services, and in no small degree to the pressing daily invitation of my dear little Pomeranian dog "Midge" to take him out for a walk.

I love my garden, but am a bad gardener, and even when permitted by our head gardener (the wife) to do a little weeding, I find the greatest difficulty in discriminating between the wheat and the tares.

I find a happy resource in my books of many nationalities, and have established a sort of weekly reading club when we meet to read German, French, and Italian literature, classical and otherwise.

Our habit has been to translate the German into English, the Italian into French, and to read the French *vis à voce* from the text.

We were favoured for some time by the presence of certain young ladies, but lighter amusements have claimed their attention, and our membership now is limited to the rector of a neighbouring parish, a keen linguist, and a neighbour, a son of Anthony Trollope, a master of French literature, and myself, a master of no tongue, but a lover of all.

I may remark that one of our young lady deserters has entitled our humble meetings, not perhaps without a sly savour of banter, the "Polyglot Club," and this title we have accepted and retained.

It has been my habit for some years to read daily the Gospel for the day, and of later years I have read it in the Russian text, having the German and English text at hand for help and comparison.

I find this practice helpful in impressing on the

life, and so to be able to do some justice to the willing support that I have been so fortunate as to secure from comrades of all ranks, in the rather experimental innovations in military tactics and training that I have ventured to introduce.

H. BENGOUGH.

THE END



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October, 1913.

# Mr. Edward Arnold's AUTUMN ANNOUNCEMENTS, 1913.

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LORD LYONS.

A Record of British Diplomacy.

By the Right Hon. LORD NEWTON.

*With Portraits. In Two Volumes. 30s. net.*

The late Lord Lyons was not only the most prominent but the most trusted English diplomatist of his day, and so great was the confidence felt in his ability that he was paid the unique compliment of being offered the post of Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

Lord Newton, who has now undertaken the task of preparing a memoir of him, enjoys the advantage of having served under him for five years at the Paris Embassy. The interest of this work lies, however, less in the personality of the Ambassador than in the highly important events in which he played so prominent a part.

Lord Lyons was the British representative at Washington during the period of the Civil War; subsequently he was Ambassador at Constantinople for two years; and finally he spent twenty years—from 1867 to 1887—as Ambassador at Paris. During the whole of this eventful period his advice was constantly sought by the Home Government upon every foreign question of importance, and his correspondence throws fresh light upon obscure passages in diplomatic history.

In this book will be found hitherto unpublished information relating

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to such matters as the critical relations between England and the United States during the course of the Civil War; the political situation in France during the closing years of the Second Empire; the secret attempt made by the British Foreign Secretary to avert the Franco-German War, and the explanation of its failure; the internal and external policy of France during the early years of the Third Republic; the War Scare of 1875; the Congress of Berlin; the Egyptian Expedition; Anglo-French political relations, and many other matters of interest.

The method selected by the writer has been to reproduce all important correspondence verbatim, and it may be confidently asserted that the student of foreign politics will find in this work a valuable record of modern diplomatic history.

## THE LIFE AND LETTERS OF GEORGE WILLIAM FREDERICK, FOURTH EARL OF CLARENDON.

By the Right Hon. Sir HERBERT MAXWELL, Bart.

*In Two Volumes With Portraits. Demy 8vo. 30s. net.*

Born in the year 1800 and dying in 1870, Lord Clarendon lived through a period of social, political, and economic change more rapid probably than had been witnessed in any similar space of time in the previous history of mankind. It was his lot, moreover, to wield considerable influence over the course of affairs, inasmuch as his public service, extending over fifty years, caused him to be employed in a succession of highly responsible, and even critical, situations. British Minister at Madrid at the outbreak and during the course of the Carlist Civil War from 1833 to 1839, he was admitted into Lord Melbourne's Cabinet immediately upon returning to England in the latter year. He was Lord Lieutenant of Ireland throughout the memorable famine years, 1847-1852. Relieved of that arduous post, Lord Clarendon entered Lord Aberdeen's government in 1852 as Foreign Secretary, which office he retained through the Crimean War, and became responsible for the terms of the Treaty of Paris in 1856. On Lord Palmerston's death in 1865, he returned to the Foreign Office, and had to deal with the settlement of the "Alabama" claims.

The annals of the first half of Queen Victoria's reign having been pretty thoroughly explored and dealt with by many competent writers, the chief interest in these pages will be found in Lord Clarendon's private correspondence, which has been well preserved, and has been entrusted to Sir Herbert Maxwell for the

purpose of this memoir. Lord Clarendon was a fluent and diligent correspondent; Charles Greville and others among his contemporaries frequently expressed a hope that his letters should some day find their way into literature. Sir Arthur Helps, for instance, wrote as follows in *Macmillan's Magazine*: "Lord Clarendon was a man who indulged, notwithstanding his public labours, in an immense private correspondence. There were some persons to whom, I believe, he wrote daily, and perhaps in after years we shall be favoured—those of us who live to see it—with a correspondence which will enlighten us as to many of the principal topics of our own period." It is upon this correspondence that Sir Herbert Maxwell has chiefly relied in tracing the motives, principles, and conduct of one of the last Whig statesmen. Among the letters dealt with, and now published for the first time, are those from Lord Melbourne, Lord Palmerston, Lord Aberdeen, Lord Derby, M. Thiers, M. Guizot, the Emperor Louis Napoleon, etc., and many ladies.

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